

ANIMATION

WORLD

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Licensing & Merchandising



ANASTASIA

Licensing & Merchandising
Strategies

Studio Stores

Merchandising Mania in
Japan

Plus
KROK '97
by oTTo
Alder

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EDITOR'S NOTEBOOK

by Heather Kenyon

It's funny. A few years ago a certain United States President went on record decrying the disintegration of the family unit and a loss of "family values." While certainly, yes, there have been radical, rapid changes to the typical family unit, I don't think it is necessarily a terrible thing. Parents, whether or not they are single parents, or both work long hours outside of the home, still love their children and want the best for them. That is what is most important. However, I do think this shift in home life has far-reaching impacts. This issue sharply focuses on one of them - licensing and merchandising to kids. Children are now left on their own more frequently and are pressed out into the world through camps, daycare, day school, etc. at an earlier age. Is this bad? Once again, I don't necessarily think so. As a result, they get to make their own decisions and form their own opinions at a much earlier age. They are now their own little society that can determine what is cool, and what they want to have. They are a new market to which to sell.

Parents, on the other hand, are often just a little too rushed, a little too occupied, and will purchase an item that a child wants without a single, second thought. We've all seen it in our local grocery store. About 5:00 p.m., a mother with two children is grocery shopping. One child is going one way, the other is going another. All are tired and just want to go home, have a meal and call it a day. As the mother is making her selection of the yogurt that she thinks is best for her

child's lunch, the child exclaims, "No, I want that kind!" And the mother, while reaching to grab her other child and keep him from scattering tomatoes all over the floor, says, "Okay." When I was a child, and that wasn't too long ago, I didn't know which kind of yogurt I wanted in my lunch. There weren't commercials for that, and so, I didn't



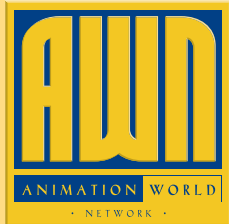
even know I had choices. But today's kids know. It really isn't that big of a deal. We aren't talking about a matter of life and death here. It's only a yogurt in a kid's lunch, but it does add up to big money for a large number of businesses who are seeking a new market to exploit. It also adds up to a generation of people who know from practically day one that they have choices and they will continue to demand them.

Licensing and merchandising continues to escalate, not only in the children's market, but also for adults. It is all to create a splash and

grab our attention, if only for a minute. We are all so busy, and there is so much going on. How can we be expected to know of everything that is interesting? It is a tough job that marketers have. Several of this month's articles mention the struggle just to be heard above the din of competition.

It seems to be a recurring theme in most areas now - the merging of companies and efforts to make things bigger. We all know of the mega-merger business deals, and as a result we are getting mega-campaigns to draw our attention. However, how soon is it going to be before all of these forms of entertainment realize that they are all just splitting each other's profit dollar? We, as consumers, have so much from which to choose and only so much money to spend. That, right there, makes things risky. Currently, a company is forced to spend so much on promotion that the situation is made even more risky. Jennifer Deare states in her article that for a "theatrical film to make a 'blip' on the consumer radar screen [it takes] ... a combined \$100 million for promotion and marketing." If you were running a studio, wouldn't that scare you? It would scare me, especially since I know how fickle an audience (me) can be. How can the little guy compete? How much will it grow, this one-upping each other to keep us, the consumer, the audience, interested? I am waiting to see what unexpected impacts occur out of this development.

In other news, the Annecy International Animated Film Festival



ANIMATION WORLD NETWORK

6525 Sunset Blvd.,
Garden Suite 10
Hollywood, CA 90028
Phone : 213.468.2554
Fax : 213.464.5914
Email : info@awn.com

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editor@awn.com

PUBLISHER

Ron Diamond, *President*
Dan Sarto, *Chief Operating Officer*

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Heather Kenyon

ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Wendy Jackson

CONTRIBUTORS :

oTTo Alder
Joan Ashworth
Thomas Basgier
Edmundo Barreiros
Sam Bauer
Yvette Burrows
Christian Clark
Jennifer Deare
John Goldsmith
Wendy Jackson
Heikki Jokinen
Heather Kenyon
Teresa A. Klein
Don Perro
Aida Queiros
Karen Raugust
Dave Siegel
Joe Toledo
Lea Zagury

OPERATIONS

Annick Teninge, *General Manager*
Chris Kostrzak, *Asst. Manager*
Sam Bauer, *Editorial Intern*

WEBMASTER

Ged Bauer

DESIGN/LAYOUT :

Ged Bauer
John Parazette-Tillar

ADVERTISING SALES

North America : Bart Vitek
Germany : Thomas Basgier
UK: Alan Smith

and Market (MIFA) has gone annual. On one hand, it is important for Europe to have a central location to meet yearly in order to do business. European production is growing and in order to foster and build upon that growth Annecy's MIFA will probably become an instantly essential place to be. However, I hope that other festivals worldwide do not suffer as a result. It is important that each region continues to have its own healthy festival to showcase to the world their unique atmosphere and work. Plus, a healthy festival circuit proves that animation is of global interest. The screening of international works in all corners of the globe can inspire

new ideas and techniques within artists thereby, ensuring that the art is kept vibrant and growing. Every month I look forward to reading the event reviews and every month I say, "Next year I am going to go there!" This month's example is oTTo Alder's fantastic review of KROK. Festivals aren't just screening rooms; they are a mixing of ideas and culture that make it truly exciting to be a part of the global animation village.

Until next time ...

Heather

CAREER CONNECTIONS

Animation World Network

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Or, for information call AWN at (213) 468-2554

editor@awn.com

November 1997

What About Us?

We are a top Australian production house who enjoys receiving your newsletter but find the info on deadlines for festivals and competitions are always too soon for us to be able to submit work. Please take us into consideration when passing on such info where and when you have control of such things.

Also, we would like to see some more global information. You are called Animation World after all! For example, we have the world's only Minister for Multimedia! Melbourne, Victoria is one of the world's fastest growing multimedia capitals. Also, the use of computers per household is very high here.

We're also interested in what's going on in the rest of the world. Do you have any discussion groups or such?

Joanne Wellington
Production Manager
Tantamount Productions
<http://www.tantamount.com.au>

Dear Joanne:

Thank you for writing! This letter touches on a number of subjects that are important to us here at Animation World Network.

First, the festivals....we make available festival information as quickly as possible. As soon as we obtain information from the festivals whose sites we host, the information is posted. The festivals that we mention in the Animation Flash are also mentioned as soon as we obtain the press release. We have

received a number of letters like yours encouraging longer leads on festival deadlines. We are read by a number of prominent festival directors, so keep your fingers crossed and hope they are reading this right now! We do provide the Calendar of Events (www.awn.com/awneng/village/calendar.html) as well which can be used as a reference.

We are striving to represent a world wide view of the industry. Australia is just one of the regions that we know we need to represent more. Even before we received your letter, we had just placed a number of calls to Australian companies and agencies to try to obtain news and spread the fact that we want and need involvement. We love to hear about animation companies all over the world and encourage people to drop us a line if we are missing something big. I have a sneaking suspicion your Australian Minister might end up in our December Gaming issue and I can't wait! I had no idea Australia had a Minister of Multimedia. We just need to be told. A great idea is to pass the Weekly Animation Flash Email Newsletter onto someone that you know. The more people that are familiar with the Flash, our Magazine and site - the more input we will have to hopefully serve you all better.

Also, we do look continually at how many people from certain countries are monitoring our site and in what they are interested. By analyzing this information we hope to serve you, our reader, better. Australia is always in the top ten hit producing countries week after week and therefore, we need to

start paying more attention to you. At the same time, South American countries are not represented in our top ten but this could be because we do not provide hardly any coverage for them. We hope to boost this region's news and coverage on our site as well.

Do we have discussion groups? Yes! We are finding that a number of people obtain the Weekly Animation Flash Email Newsletter but seem to have forgotten our main site. The Animation Flash is just the tip of the AWN iceberg. At www.awn.com you will find, among other features, chats and discussion forums, an online animation art exhibit called The Gallery, Career Connections, The Vault, a database of films and filmmakers, The Marketplace and the Animation Village which hosts a number of other animation related web sites. We have a lot to offer and it will only continue to get better as Animation World Network lives up to its promise of being the global meeting place for animation enthusiasts. We want the site to be a place where people can meet from all over the world and exchange ideas and information. So please folks, we can't tell you enough, drop us a line, let us know what you like and what you hate because we are listening and we are hearing loud and clear.

Thank you again for writing Joanne. It provided quite the soapbox! And yes, you will see more Australian coverage, we promise.

Sincerely,
The Editors

The Animated Strategy: Building A Strategic Plan For Your Products

by Jennifer Deare

People who work in creative fields, particularly animation, can't afford to overlook the critical importance of a strategic alliance opportunity for product marketing. It's an imperative for creating a successful product in today's over-crowded, intensely fragmented marketplace, primarily because it allows you to put money—or valuable promotion and exposure—behind your product.

Your goal is to attract a distracted, fragmented audience to your product, and convince them that their investment of time will pay off in entertainment value—and that yours is *more* worthwhile than any of the myriad of daily entertainment choices they have.

In fact, second only to creating the product, strategic marketing is the most important element of your total package. It has become so important that very often the marketing and development of alliances begins before there is even a final script.

Today, the buzzword in animation, entertainment and licensing is "branding." But it's much more than a buzz word; building a brand is the only road to long-term survival and financial viability. Whether you are looking to create a one-time event or a series for network or strip syndication, you

need to build a brand consciousness and a brand preference among your target audience. In today's marketplace, entertainment and animation has to be approached strategically similarly to traditional packaged goods. While it may, understandably, upset some

product is merely another commodity and very easy for consumers to pass by.

Long-Term Strategies vs. Event Marketing

These are currently the two dominant strategies in animation marketing. The major studios—Disney, Warner Bros., Fox, etc.—tend to create events, especially for theatrical releases. They front-load the entire marketing effort with a multi-month, multi-million dollar effort. (In fact, many in the entertainment and licensing fields believe that the opening price point for a theatrical film to make a "blip" on the consumer radar screen is a combined \$100 million for promotion and marketing.) The objective is to drive consumer awareness and desire to see a film over a short period of time, usually six weeks. Disney is the undisputed master of this strategy, creating events and tie-ins which are seen worldwide.

Long-term strategies are more appropriate for video releases and series. Arguably, each of these has a longer "shelf life," and the objective is to build an ongoing involvement between the consumer

and the property which will result in repeated viewings and increased sales of merchandise as a franchise expands.

Then, there are hybrids. *Men*



These advertising posters for Warner Bros. feature film *Space Jam* were so well-liked by the fans that they were stolen from the bus stations they were displayed in, faster than they could be replaced. © and ™ 1996 Warner Bros

sensibilities to consider creative product in the same vein as dessert toppings and bathroom tissue, you have to differentiate your brand in the marketplace. Otherwise, your



The *Men in Black* product line includes everything from baseball caps to phone cards to action figures. In all, Sony Signatures has agreements with more than 50 licensors for the property. © Columbia TriStar/Sony

In Black is a perfect example. Though not animated in its theatrical release, the animated series debuted this fall. In essence, the movie targeted to the mass market was the "event" which launched the franchise and the animated series which will be targeted to kids. My own son is too young to have seen the movie, but he certainly is aware of *Men In Black* and wants the merchandise. You can bet he'll be watching the series, because *he already has a relationship with the characters from the promotions*. With the play pattern and involvement begun even before the series even premieres, *Men In Black* already has a jump on its competition.

Getting To "Critical Mass"

Interestingly, the promotional tactics for each of these two branding strategies can be similar. The objective is to break through the clutter with a property and develop a critical

mass of awareness. Ideally, consumers should see or hear about the property virtually anywhere they go.

One of the most effective is the strategic alliance. For theatrical release animation, fast food alliances—McDonald's and Disney, Burger King and *The Lost World*, Taco Bell and *Star Wars*—are the

best known. Together, the combined advertising budgets for the movie and the restaurant chain allows them to reach critical mass very quickly. But not for long, which is part of the "event" strategy. Because the movies and promotions come one after the other so quickly, the promotions have to be big and they have to be fast to have an impact.

Your goal is to attract a distracted, fragmented audience to your product...

However, not every product has the kind of budget or potential that can sustain a fast food tie-in. For the theatrical and video release

of *Shiloh*, Deare Marketing developed a tie-in with pet foods and a charity drawing on the natural affinity between dog owners and the heartwarming story. At the same time, the movie got significant exposure in a venue where movies are seldom promoted, so the actual value of promotion in that uncluttered environment is potentially greater than if the promotion had been a small voice in a very crowded venue.

Today, the buzzword in animation, entertainment and licensing is "branding."

Christopher Byrne, contributing editor to *Playthings* magazine, notes that in his research, parents are beginning to tune out to promotions because there are so many of them. "Targeting and reaching consumers where they don't expect it can be very powerful as it is increasingly difficult to be 'heard' above the promotional noise at fast food and other 'traditional' promotional outlets."

Playing Like "The Big Boys"

The fact is: Very few animators can compete with Disney or any of the major studios. But everyone can learn to leverage their



Just in time for the holidays, Fox has introduced the master toy line for the November-release, animated feature film, *Anastasia*. © Twentieth Century Fox. All Rights Reserved.



In 1996, Disney and McDonald's entered a ten-year, exclusive, cross-promotional alliance. Promoting the limited edition video release of Disney's *Snow White*, the restaurant chain is offering special toys and kids meals. © Disney. All Rights Reserved.

unique assets to achieve marketing objectives.

Here, the packaged goods approach pays off. Tie-ins capitalize on the shared qualities of the entertainment product and partner brand, benefiting both partners. The entertainment property gets broad-based exposure and media support in alternative venues (e.g., supermarkets, mass merchants, etc.), and the packaged goods product gets a unique offer to differentiate itself from its competition in advertising and at point-of-sale. These promotions are separate from revenues and promotion generated through licensees, yet complement and enhance the franchise as a whole.

It's not enough to be outstanding at your craft, you must be outstanding at promotion as well.

In developing tie-ins, it's important to match the essence of the animation to that of the partner. For example, a family-oriented video targeted to Christmas is ideal for brands which have a wholesome brand imagery—and who promote competitively at holiday time. Moreover, since promotional

licensing is an opportunity for a small animator, versus a profit center, the small animator can waive traditional fees and royalties in return for support. Partners win and the producers win.

Timing is also critical. Many brands are planning fourth quarter 1998 marketing plans and positioning a year to eighteen months in advance. In other words, time's getting tight for *next* Christmas

right now. While changing broadcast line-ups and release dates present challenges, there are still many opportunities. At Deare Marketing, our proprietary database of marketers and products allows us to streamline the process by identifying potential partners quickly.

In preparing to develop tie-ins, the following tips can help you be successful:

- Think about product and promotional applications as you develop your story lines and characters.
- Look for opportunities to include marketing partners in the actual animated product, much as Disney and American Express did for *Hercules*.
- Get to the essence, or feelings, behind your property. That should open up both your thinking and opportunities for developing promotions.
- Approach your product as a "brand." Look for ways to expand it outside the traditional animation strategy and clarify the ways in which your product complements the potential partners' brands.
- Develop a comprehensive list of

what you offer a partner (be as specific as possible), and what you want in return.

- Launch a creative program for promoting your product, separate from the tie-in. (Your partners want to benefit from *all* the efforts you're making to generate awareness to leverage their involvement.)

While it may, understandably, upset some sensibilities to consider creative product in the same vein as dessert toppings and bathroom tissue, you have to differentiate your brand in the marketplace.

As production costs spiral and the competition even to be seen intensifies, promotion plays a critical role. Today, many creative people — authors, animators and more — are learning that it's not enough to be outstanding at your craft, you must be outstanding at promotion as well.

Jennifer Deare is the founder and president of Deare Marketing, Inc., a New York-based marketing and communications industry which specializes in strategic alliances, continuity programs, direct mail, promotion and strategic marketing. Over the past ten years, the agency has served a broad variety of clients, particularly in the entertainment, consumer products, financial services, retail and technology industries.

Merchandising To Kids – It Ain't Child's Play

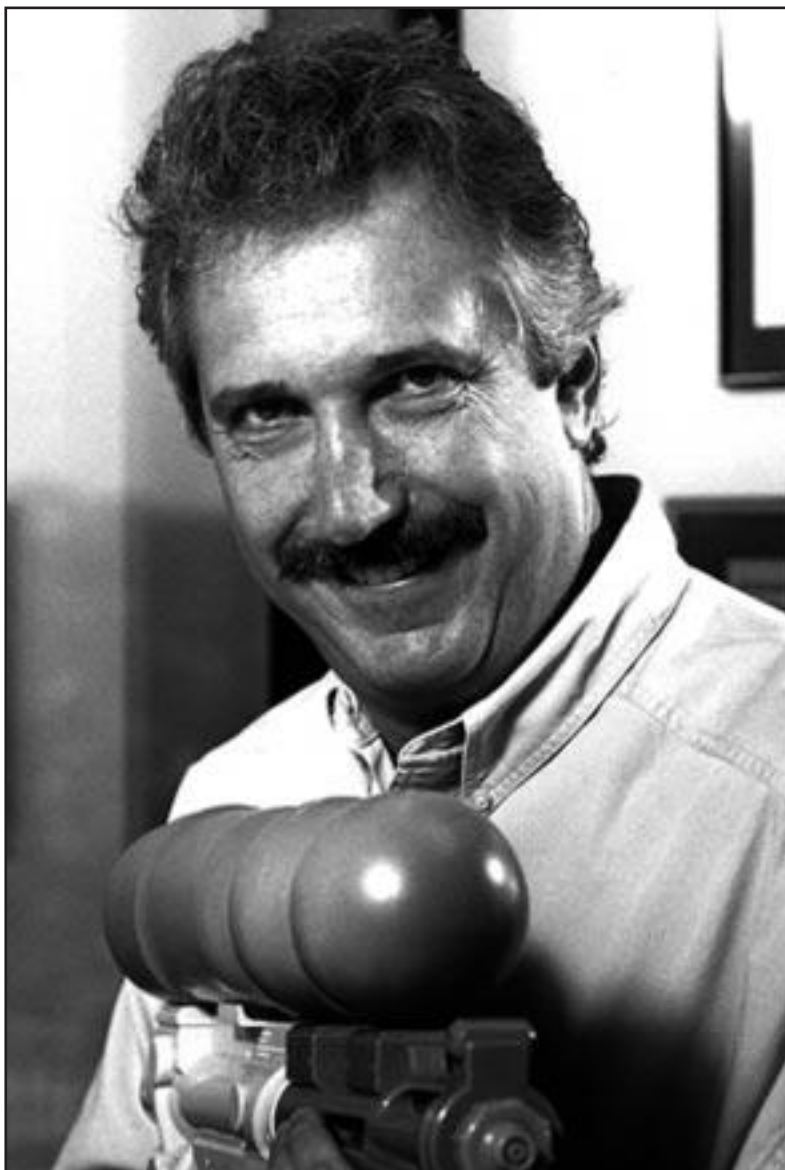
by Dave Siegel

Merchandising and marketing to kids has become one of the hottest areas of interest for today's consumer packaged goods marketers. Why is it happening? How is it being done? Is it going to escalate and what might be its effects? Just read on!

Today's savvy businesses have come to realize that the old saying, "Kids should be seen, but not heard," is long, long gone, especially when it comes to their role in the purchase of just about any product or service within the household. Businesses are spending billions of dollars in marketing and merchandising to children via licensing, in-store display activity, packaging and advertising. Children's consumer research is at an all time high as companies explore new and different ways to appeal to this market.

Today's savvy businesses have come to realize that the old saying, "Kids should be seen, but not heard," is long, long gone...

And it's not just toy or cereal companies interested in children



Dave Siegel.

anymore! This year alone, my firm has been approached by such industries as home electronics, paints, fragrances, clothing, automobiles, health care and, of course, food companies. All are seeking help in talking, marketing and advertising to kids.

Why the Sudden Interest

The reason for all of this new

attention being placed on children is - *their influence!* Kids actually influence between 20% and 80% of the purchases in most categories. In fact, a few years ago, a study found that children were extremely influential in the purchase of 20% of all cars made by families with children. Our own work has found that anytime children believe there is a product designed especially for them and they know about it, their influence in the category goes way up!

Modern moms and dads regularly ask their children: What do they want brought home from the store? Where would they like to eat? Where would they like to go on vacation? What do they want to do?

What's causing this? Kids are being forced to become adults at a dramatically early age. No longer do many have the luxury of both a mom and a dad. In fact, at any one point in time, roughly 1 in 4 children are living with only one parent. They no longer have mom home watching them because she is usually working. They no longer

have a problem making their own food because of microwaves and toaster ovens, and the vast majority of kids are experts at using these appliances by the age of six. They also know more information than their parents ever hope to regarding new products and services. 95% of all kids are using computers and over 70% of these kids are under the age of six. Most kids get their own magazine subscriptions and, unlike their parents, eagerly await the next commercial on TV.

Businesses are spending billions of dollars in marketing and merchandising to children...

How Do You Reach Them?

Businesses approach children through several avenues. Among the most widely used are:

Licensing

Licensing has become a huge marketing tool when it comes to attracting kids. Children continually tell us in research that before they ask for a specific product, they want to *know* that the product is made specifically for *them*.. Businesses have found that one of the best ways to let children know that a product or service is for them is to associate it with a recognizable character. Even by the age of two, children are able to point to a picture of Barney on a particular piece of clothing and urge mom to buy it for them.

Licensing makes up an estimated 50% of all toy industry sales. Virtually all video games (99.2%) and action figures (96.7%) are sold solely because of their license. However, licensing goes far beyond

its use for selling toys. To insure a top selling fruit snack to kids, Farley added the *Rugrats* license to their product. Kraft General Foods has now licensed its' major lines with Nickelodeon; McDonalds with Disney; Curad Bandages with the Cartoon Network and on and on and on. More and more major consumer companies are frequenting the annual licensing show, reading *Licensing Magazine*, and employing licensing agents to help them find the right license with which to associate.

The important thing for us to remember is that the reason businesses have turned to licenses is in order to reduce their risk when appealing to children. Therefore, when it comes to choosing a license, most aggressive, knowledgeable businesses will seek a *proven*, hot license property with which to associate. This is good news for those animators with a proven, hot license. If you are developing a new one or are holding a property that is less than stellar, good luck!

In-Store Displays

In over half the families we interview, children regularly go grocery shopping with their moms to insure that the "right" foods are being brought home. 62% of all kids 9-11 years old report visiting the supermarket at least once a week. By the age of five, half of all kids go to the supermarket without their parents, instead using an older sibling or friend as a chaperone.

With all of these children in all of these shops, it is no wonder that in-store merchandising to children has become more prolific and dramatic. Many U.S. supermarkets sport a highly effective Frito Lay

Chester Cheetah display whereby kids can look in a funny mirror, pick out their own snacks and be entertained. Kid-oriented floor graphics and signage is becoming more prominent because kids pay more attention to floors than any other area of a store. This year alone, we have produced in-store displays for bicycles, toothbrushes, computers and fruit products.

Advertising

Have you watched any kid TV lately? If not, you will be surprised to see who is advertising to kids. Suntan lotions, shampoos, clothing, vacations, entertainment alternatives and of course, the ever present, food products, even those that require that pal, the microwave, are all cramming the airwaves. Furthermore, this type of advertising attention is not just occurring on the tube, but also in magazines. As I've said, many kids have their own magazine subscriptions and it is possible for a business to reach about half of all targeted kids with just a few magazines like, *Nickelodeon*, *Sports Illustrated for Kids*, and *Disney Adventures*. These magazines contain not only the advertising mentioned above, but other categories such as home electronics, cars, and more.

The reason for all of this new attention being placed on children is - their influence!

Businesses have realized that if you research kids and develop products for them, then you had better advertise to the kids and not just their parents. That is why advertising targeted to kids has now topped the US \$1 billion mark.

Will it Escalate?

There is little doubt in my mind that marketing, merchandising and licensing to children will continue to escalate through the foreseeable future. Kids are becoming even more influential in the purchase of goods and services, and more importantly, businesses are finding success in marketing and merchandising to them. For example, the fruit snack category alone amasses sales of over US \$1 billion annually. This category did not even exist a few years ago. "Lunchables" (a packaged lunch product) and other take-to-school lunch products sell in the hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars annually. Children's yogurt such as "Sprinklins," "Danamals," and others, also enjoy hundreds of millions of U.S. dollars in sales annually.

The demand for kids' products, services, toys, etc. will increase

Also, kids are continuing to become more comfortable with searching for and processing information. Kids are surfing the Internet, using electronic pagers and listening to their own radio stations, such as Radio Aaahs which is just for children.

Lastly, businesses have already begun to escalate their use of merchandising and marketing to children. Businesses are beginning to look at using school menus, book covers, in-school posters, Internet advertising and more, to target today's kids. Kids media is expanding as well with programming, stations, and magazines being developed specifically for this target group. In short, if kids are seeking more information and becoming more influ-

ential and businesses are seeking more business and are seeing great results with this market segment - how could efforts not escalate?

The Effects

Now it's time to speculate...where is this all going to lead?

Here are my guesses:

- The demand for kids' products, services, toys, etc. will *increase*. As kids see more and learn more, they will want more. Just like us adults! I recently had the opportunity to tour the Biltmore Estates in North Carolina, and while there I saw a Christmas gift-giving diary. Not surprisingly, in the early 1900s children, even of the very wealthy, received one gift for Christmas. Today, children receive dozens. When I began marketing toys 15 years ago, it was impossible to sell a toy for over U.S. \$20. Kids have become so influential that the magic price point is now more like U.S. \$200!
- There is little doubt in my mind that kids will continue to get better and better in their ability to process complex information quickly. All one has to do is watch how kids currently work on computers. They want their information to be interactive and they want it fast. They want it brightly colored and they want it to talk to them...and *not* to their parents. This, in turn, will lead to more dramatic, colorful, interactive efforts on the part of marketers. This will also mean that even more attention getting devices/licenses/techniques will be needed to break through

the clutter and capture a child's attention.

- Kids will continue to grow up at younger and younger ages. Today kids can talk to other kids around the world. They can watch television that is produced and being aired in cities all over the globe. As a result, they will be exposed to life not only in their neighborhood, but in the streets and alleys of the world.

In summary, the time ahead bodes well for many of us involved in kids marketing and advertising. For those involved in animation, there will be even more needs placed upon you to develop more attention grabbing, satisfying, breakthrough work. The kids will want it. The businesses will need it.

Dave Siegel is the general manager of Small Talk, a leading kids marketing and advertising consulting group. He has been in the consumer packaged goods marketing and advertising business for more than 25 years, with over 20 years of hands-on experience marketing to kids. Dave has been interviewed in The Wall Street Journal, The Washington Post, The Atlanta Constitution, Advertising Age, BrandWeek, and many others. He has also been a featured speaker for the American Marketing Association, Disney, Grocery Manufacturers Association and the U.S. Olympic National Convention, among others.

Animation Studio Stores: The Sophisticated Retail Outlet

by Teresa A. Klein

Just as computers and the art of animation have become more and more sophisticated and specialized, so have the retail outlets for distribution of animation-based products. No longer are the Donald Duck-versus-Daffy Duck battles for mass-market retail shelf space satisfactory for licensed animated



The Warner Bros. New York City flagship Studio Store at Fifth Avenue and 57th Street has nine floors and 75,000 square feet of retail space. © Warner Bros.

products. Studios have, in fact, taken a large part of their retail financial futures into their own hands by launching and operating their own retail stores, and manufacturing their own merchandise.

Ten years ago, The Walt Disney Company opened its first The Disney Store in Glendale, California. Four years later, in 1991, Warner Bros. opened its first Warner Bros. Studio Store in Los Angeles. Now there are more than 430

Disney Stores in the United States and over 170 in 11 other countries around the world. Warner Bros. Studio Stores top 161, with that number expected to pass 180 by year's end. The number of international Warner Bros. stores tripled in 1996, to more than 22, with debut locations in Japan and Australia and additional locations in Singapore and Hong Kong. According to the company, 1997 will see the addition of 15 more international units by year's end. "The International Studio Stores division will continue to expand its presence in 1997, with additional store openings to include entries into Indonesia and Guam, and a Tokyo flagship in the Ginza district," according to Warner Bros. Consumer Products.

Warner Bros. feels that, since their debut, the Studio Stores have "captivated consumers with their 'movie-studio, back-lot' design, interactive attractions, dramatic multimedia environments, and diverse assortment of high-quality merchandise." The company estimates that each store features over 2,500 products. "The Studio Stores represent a significant factor in the growth of the Consumer Products division," explains Dan Romanelli, President of Warner Bros. Consumer Products. "When we open stores internationally, they create attention, excitement and traffic. They showcase the Warner Bros. brands in what has become known as a unique shopping and entertainment experience."

The Disney Store combines retail and entertainment in a way that

"makes each visit seem like a trip to Disneyland." The Disney Store is about treating the shopper to a special shopping adventure. Even a store's design and theme start "with a story line that is utilized to create a visual 'story-telling experience' for shoppers." Larger-than-life character statues, video walls and specially crafted merchandising displays also help to create a unique experience. Merchandise themes are changed every six to eight weeks. Service is also of the highest importance to The Disney Store chain. According to The Disney Store, "cast members (employees) have a reputation for treating each and every guest like a special visitor." Plus, employees are "extensively trained in Disney traditions and history," and "value the Disney name and work diligently to uphold The Disney Stores high standards of excellence."

Competition Leads to Entrepreneurial Opportunities

While these two leading animation studios maintain their dominance in the animation field, their creative juices are constantly being challenged by other studios adding or expanding animation divisions.



The Disney Store at 711 Fifth Avenue in New York City. © Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved



The Warner Bros. Flagship store features "The 3-D Film Experience," a theater screening the first 3-D Looney Tunes film, *Marvin the Martian in 3-D.* © Warner Bros.

Twentieth Century Fox will release its first full-length animated feature *Anastasia* this holiday season, and Universal Studios and Viacom are two other competitors. Not only are these and other studios vying for theatrical dollars, but also for overall consumer retail dollars. As retail sales for licensed merchandise topped \$109.5 billion in 1996, an increase of 6.5 percent over 1995 (*The Licensing Letter*, June 1, 1997), the importance of capturing and maintaining a loyal customer is more important than ever. As owners and operators of their own retail outlets, studios have created win-win situations for themselves and their shareholders. By having their own store, they are virtually guaranteed a sale. For if a customer walks into a Disney Store or a Warner Bros. Studio Store, they are there for a specific character. For example, if a consumer is looking for Mickey Mouse merchandise, they wouldn't go into a Warner Bros. Studio Store.

As retail sales for licensed merchandise topped \$109.5 billion in 1996, an increase of 6.5 percent over 1995..., the importance of capturing and maintaining a loyal customer is more important than ever.

"Other licensors have opened, or are planning to open, their own retail outlets to supplement licensing income," says Rich Levitt, editor of *The Licensing Book* trade magazine. "None have done

so more aggressively than Warner Bros. While the Warner Bros. Studio Stores have occupied prime real-estate worldwide, they have also been highly effective as a tool to show the [mass-market] retailer the merchandising power of the classic licenses."

Event Properties Offer Limited Sales Window

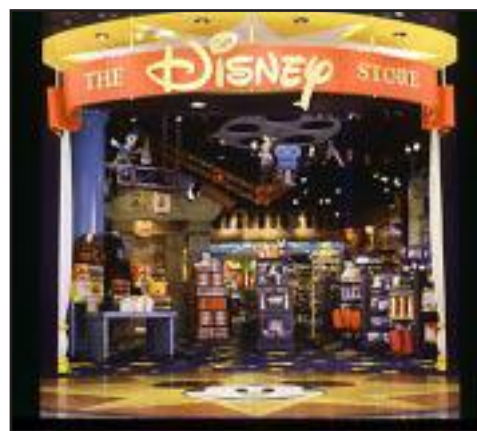
Because of consumer demand, mass marketers quite often concern themselves with merchandising of licensed products based on the feature film(s) of the month. On the average, this provides a four-to-eight week time frame on which to capitalize on the hype surrounding a movie's release. Traffic-building, in-store marketing programs are one way to take advantage of this limited window of opportunity. These may include endcaps, free-standing displays, window displays, or in-store boutiques.

Studios have, in fact, taken a large part of their retail financial futures into their own hands by launching and operating their own retail stores and manufacturing their own merchandise.

But these merchandising programs are not limited in use to just the mass marketers. Even though specialized studio stores feature their own products, they still must capitalize on an event film's same brief window of opportunity that the mass marketers do. Only, they have a little more flexibility in which to do it. For example, this past summer, the Warner Bros. Studio Store flagship location on 57th Street and Fifth Avenue in New York City dedicated the entire first floor to the movie *Batman & Robin*, complete with life-size models of the movies' "frozen characters." In addition, actors' costumes were displayed on additional floors of the

monster nine-story, 75,000-square-foot store. Likewise, The Disney Store prominently featured *Hercules* merchandise, from clothes to toys to shoes, at the front of its stores during the film's period of release.

In addition to having more space to work with, these specialized stores feature a large percentage of exclusive merchandise that consumers cannot purchase outside of the respective chain. Only a small amount of The Disney Store's merchandise is available outside of the stores as licensed product. The majority is what is known as "private-label merchandise." Warner Bros. says that about 80% of its store's products generally are private-label goods not available outside the Warner chain. "Still," according to *The Licensing Letter*, "by their presence in major malls and shopping areas, the stores presumably aid licensed-product sales [in other stores] by showcasing characters and movies."



Disney regularly changes its' store-front to promote current properties. During the theatrical release of *Hercules*, the front of many Disney Stores were altered to say "The Hercules Store." © Walt Disney Company. All Rights Reserved.

The Licensing Letter also reports, "In some cases, the profitability of the store becomes secondary to larger marketing goals. The store fronts act as 'billboards' for the brand or property in very high-traffic locations. For Warner or Disney, frontage can promote merchandise tied to the event of the

moment, as Warner is doing [did do] for *Batman & Robin*, Disney for *Hercules*. Also, the specialty stores can be merchandising labs, with data and trends given to licensees (whose merchandise is likely distributed through other channels) and other retailers."

Television Extends a Property's Life

Because of the brief window of sales opportunity due to the short theatrical life of feature films, ani-

feature films that have made the transition to television series include *The Little Mermaid*, due for re-release in theaters this holiday season; *The Lion King*, with the series *Around the World with Timon & Pumbaa*; *Aladdin*; and the soon-to-be-animated *Hercules*.

Other studios have also realized the profitability of animation following live-action movies. The biggest movie of the summer of 1997, Sony's *Men In Black*, debuted this fall as an animated series. Also in 1998, watch for Sony's *Godzilla* feature movie around the end of May. An animated series is already slated to follow in the fall of 1998.

Classics Lead to Profits

But let's step back again to those profitable animated classic characters. Disney has them, and Warner Bros. has a lot of them since they acquired Turner Broadcasting Systems



Warner Bros. Studio Stores section off the stores into types of merchandise, such as the Animation Art Gallery pictured here. © Warner Bros.

ated series based on the films often enable studios and their licensees to broaden their lines and extend the life of a property. Warner Bros. and Disney are both well practiced at this.

For Warner Bros., one of the best examples of an animated series carrying on the popularity of a live-action feature film is *Batman*. Although *Batman: The Animated Series* is appropriate for a wider age range of children than the live-action movies, this animated series is what keeps sales of licensed merchandise going. In particular, the action-figure toy line by Hasbro Toy Group appears on *The Toy Book* magazine's "What's Hot!" list consistently month after month. *Superman*, which debuted as a new animated series in the fall of 1996, is also on its way to becoming a new live-action movie.

The list of Disney animated

with its Hanna-Barbera library in 1996. The challenge classic characters present to the studios is "freshness." Consumers want to know "What's new?" Retailers want to know, "What have you done for me lately?" They don't want old characters that are going to sit on their shelves or hang from their racks; they want something that is going to sell - a new, fresh look applied to an old favorite. When selling to the mass-market retailers, the studios have to remind buyers of the ongoing strength of a classic character and how they can best maximize the property's long-term prospects.

Owning one's own stores comes in handy again with the marketing of classic merchandise. Stores can be a testing ground for popularity before introducing classic product into the mass-market outlets, or one can choose to be exclusive, which is a driving factor to the

appeal of specialized stores. As Warner Bros. Consumer Products' Rob Gruen told *The Licensing Book*, "There is no question that the Warner Bros. Studio Stores have made a major impact on our overall retail strategies. I've always felt that you have to showcase your brands to demonstrate their viability at retail. The stores have proven to be the ultimate showcase for Looney Tunes, Batman, and other DC Comics properties. Yes, they make money, but more, they say to retail, 'Look what you can do with this property.'"

What better way for a studio to guarantee prominent placement on store shelves but then to have a store filled exclusively with its own products?

Furthermore, what can be done with merchandise based on a property, whether it is the latest theatrical event or a long-time favorite, is wide open when you're the owner of the property and the retail store in which it is sold. From mugs, to t-shirts to action figures to stuffed animals, products that animated characters are portrayed on have to battle for the mass-market retail shelf space which is becoming more and more scarce. What better way for a studio to guarantee prominent placement on store shelves but then to have a store filled exclusively with its own products?

Teresa A. Klein is a freelance writer, specializing in toys, licensing and related industries. She serves on the board of directors for the non-profit organizations, Women In Toys and Editorial Freelancers Association, and was editor of The Toy Book and founding editor of Specialty Retailer magazines. She resides in New Jersey with her husband and two preschool-aged children.

Merchandising in Japan: It's Big Rewards and Competition

by Karen Raugust

In Japan, licensed merchandise inspired by animation is, as a rule, available for a short time only—usually from three months to two years—before it disappears from store shelves. During this brief period, however, licensors can profit significantly. In fact, licensing hits can generate sales levels nearly equal to those associated with merchandising blockbusters in the United States, a country with twice Japan's population.

According to EPM Communications, publisher of *The Licensing Letter*, retail sales of all types of licensed merchandise in Japan totaled U.S.\$10.6 billion in 1996, translating to annual purchases of U.S.\$86 per capita. Approximately 45% of the total, or U.S.\$4.8 billion, is

attributable to entertainment and character licensing, largely driven by animation. Industry observers estimate that about 50% of all merchandising activity in Japan is based on local properties, with the remainder primarily due to those from the United States and Europe.

Children's Properties

Licensed animation properties in Japan can be grouped into three main categories. The first includes television programming aimed at youngsters aged 3-12. This sector is where the most lucrative short-term properties arise. For example, *Sailor Moon*, a series produced by Toei Animation and one

of the top licensed properties of the 1990s, generated approximately U.S.\$800 million in retail sales of licensed merchandise in Japan in two years. Children's properties are extensively licensed for nearly every type of product, ranging from snowboards and apparel to chopsticks and instant noodles. Federico Colpi, senior manager of the international department at Dynamic Planning, the Japanese licensor of properties including *Devilman* and *Mazinger Z*, says that Dynamics property *Cutey Honey F* has been licensed for more than 200 products in less than six months, a typical situation. Toys and video games are among the most important categories; some toy manufacturers are even affiliated with animation compa-

nies. Toymaker Bandai, for example, owns Sunrise, an animation house known for such toy-driven properties as *Gundam*, which debuted in 1979. Merchandise is sold in nearly every distribution channel, from toy, book and candy shops

to department and convenience stores.

Licensing hits can generate sales levels nearly equal to those associated with merchandising blockbusters in the United States, a country with twice Japan's population.

The Teen and Young Adult Market

Whereas licensed properties for children are primarily supported by exposure on broadcast television, awareness for the second category of animation properties, those targeted at teens and young adults, is created mainly by direct-to-home video productions (known in Japan as original animated video, or OAV) and comic books. Much of the merchandise, which includes t-shirts, vinyl figure/model kits, collectible action figures, posters, and cigarette lighters, is sold through anime and manga shops. Properties for teens



This postage stamp from Japan features the popular Doraemon animated character



The Hello Kitty character is featured on all kinds of products in Japan. The "digital pets" which have recently become so popular in the U.S. started in Japan, with products like this Hello Kitty digital charm from Sanrio. © Sanrio, Inc.



Hello Kitty, the animated series produced by DIC Entertainment. © Sanrio, Inc.

and young adults do not drive as extensive product sales as those for younger children, but they can be very lucrative. Retail sales of merchandise based on the 1996 hit *Evangelion*, for example, exceeded U.S.\$255 million.

Children's properties are extensively licensed for nearly every type of product, ranging from snowboards and apparel to chopsticks and instant noodles.

Both of these sectors of the animation licensing business are primarily centered around short-term properties, as noted. "Only current television shows' characters are licensed for merchandising, and when a television show goes off the air, manufacturing and distribution of merchandise stops too," says Dynamic Plannings Colpi. This situation is beginning to change, however, as producers create serial OAVs and/or multiple television sequels. For example, Akira Toriyama's *Dragon Ball Z* has inspired 24 movies and more than 500 television episodes over 10 years, plus extensive licensing, and NTV's *Anpanman* and Shogakken Productions' *Doraemon* have also driven significant long-term merchandising activity directed at younger kids. In addition, several popular OAVs are based on television programs from the 1970s, including Tokyo Movie Shinsha's *Lupin III* and Dynamics' *Mazinger*, and merchandise is now marketed to consumers in their 30s.

The Lucrative Classics

The third type of animation licensing involves truly classic properties, a very different business from the two categories discussed above. These properties may have been based on animation originally, but

they currently stand on their own. In fact, exposure created by the licensed merchandise itself often drives their popularity. The primary example of this sector, and the top licensor overall in Japan, is the Walt Disney Company, with its classic characters like Mickey Mouse, Donald Duck and Winnie the Pooh. Popular classic properties come from both Japan and abroad. Creations such as *Tetsuan Atom* (*Astro Boy*) and *Jungle Taitei* (*Kimba, the White Lion*) by Osamu Tezuka, considered the father of Japanese animation, have achieved classic status. Another classic licensor is Sanrio, owner of properties including Hello Kitty and Kerokerokeroppi. Non-Japanese classics, in addition to the Disney family, include Charles Schultz's *Peanuts*, licensed by United Media; Hanna-Barbera's sniggering dog Muttley, known in Japan as Ken Ken, from the 1970s TV series *Wacky Races*, licensed by Warner Bros.; and Warner's Looney Tunes characters.

One characteristic that most classics have in common is that they are cute. "Cute is incredibly important in Japan," says David Buckley, president of Copyrights Japan Ltd., agent for properties including *Paddington Bear*, *Spot*, *Musti* and *Brambly Hedge*. "If its cute, its bound to sell." Cute classic characters, as well as some newer ones, appeal not only to kids, but also to adults, particularly women in their 20s and 30s.

Classic Promotions

While many classic properties have some support from ani-

mation, their licensors primarily create awareness through other means. Theme parks such as Disneyland Tokyo and Sanrio's two parks — Puroland, an indoor facility near Tokyo, and Harmonyland, an outdoor attraction in Beppu City — are especially beneficial in generating exposure. Merchandise based on classic properties is increasingly boutique at retail outlets, both in free-standing stores and shop-in-shops. A free-standing store is a store that only features a certain

company's or characters merchandise, whereas a shop-in-shop is a kiosk or area within a store that only features a company's or character's merchandise. This boutique technique not only drives purchases, but also helps to create awareness. Disney Stores, Sanrio Gift Gates and Warner Studio Stores are examples, as are shops dedicated to Snoopy, Babar, Beatrix Potter and Paddington Bear in Tokyo, Yokohama and Osaka. Some fad characters, those featured in television series or targeted toward children, are also merchandised in dedicated shops, such as those overseen by televi-

sion station NTV.

Classic properties are licensed for virtually every category, with stationery, novelties and gift items (known collectively in Japan as "fancy goods"), accessories and foods being especially important. Products are high quality, and are positioned as brands (labeled products that consumers can trust) rather than as novelty merchandise. Promotions are also very significant



Dragon Ball Z has inspired 24 movies and more than 500 television episodes over 10 years, plus extensive licensing. © 1996 B.S./S.T.A. Licensed by FUNimation. All Rights Reserved.

for classic characters in Japan (and increasingly for any licensed animation property), with tie-in partners ranging from food companies to airlines to banks. Annie Morita, director of publicity at Warner Bros. Consumer Products, says that Warner characters including Looney Tunes, *Wacky Races* and Tom & Jerry recently have been involved in bank tie-ins, which are currently popular as financial institutions employ animated characters to promote junior savings programs and to appeal to women, traditionally Japanese households' financial decision makers.

**If it's cute, it's bound to sell. -
David Buckley**

The Limited Role of Animated Features

Unlike in most countries, animated films do not play a large role in Japan's licensing market, although movies based on video games, OAVs or television series can help extend a property's life. Even the top licensor in the country, Disney, does not generate significant licensing revenues from its film properties in Japan. One notable exception to this rule is Studio Ghibli, the producer of movies directed by Hayao Miyazaki and Isao Takahata. Their annual releases are among the top-grossing films in the country. Miyazaki's 1997 *Princess Mononoke* quickly became the top Japanese film of all time. Some of their properties that have generated licensed merchandise include Miyazaki's *My Neighbor Totoro* (1988) and *Porco Rosso* (1992) and Takahata's *Pom Poko* (1994). A few films by other studios, such as Katsuhiro Otomo's *Akira* (1988) and Mamoru Oshii's *Ghost in the Shell* (1995), have driven licensing activ-

ity for older audiences.

With the exception of classic properties, foreign animation is rare, although some international programs, such as *Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles* and *X-Men*, can break through. A popular morning show, *Ponkikies*, ends with rotating vignettes of foreign programs *Thomas the Tank Engine*, *Postman Pat* and *The Busy World of Richard Scarry*, all of which are licensed in Japan. Fuji TV has even introduced a *Ponkikies* merchandising effort as well.

Operations - Japan Style

From an operational standpoint, some differences exist between licensing in Japan and in other countries. For example, in most regions royalties are based on the number of items sold, whereas in Japan they are pegged to the number of pieces manufactured. "Of course, there are no sales reports either," says Dynamics Colpi. "All the amount is paid beforehand, and the licensor does not take any risk in the case that a product or a book does not sell as expected." Another difference is the use of royalty seals. "We use certificate stamps to control the quantity of the licensed products to be released to the market," says Mr. Kurozumi, licensing manager at Cosmo Merchandising, agent for non-



The Cutey Honey property has been licensed for more than 200 products in less than six months. © 1997 Y. Iisaka/Dynamic Planning/TV Asahi/Toei Animation.

Japanese properties including *Harvey Comics*. These seals or stamps, which are attached to all officially licensed items, are color coded by price, assisting licensors in their efforts to spot counterfeiting. Kurozumi also notes that royalties in Japan are often based on the retail rather than the wholesale price, unlike most other countries.

With the exception of classic properties, foreign animation is rare...

All told, more than 200 animation studios do business in Japan, and many of them, including Toei, Nippon Animation, Tokyo Movie Shinsha and Tatsunoko, have licensing arms, as do several of the seven terrestrial broadcasters. This situation is indicative of the competitive nature of the marketplace. While emphasizing that licensed merchandise inspired by animation can be lucrative, experts point out that breaking into the Japanese market can be difficult for domestic and international licensors alike.

Karen Raugust is the author of several books and reports on licensing and entertainment, including The Licensing Business Handbook, International Licensing: A Status Report (both available from EPM Communications, New York) and Merchandise Licensing for the Television Industry (available from Focal Press, Newton, Mass.). She also writes about licensing, animation and other topics for publications including The Hollywood Reporter, Publishers Weekly and Animation Magazine, and acts as a consultant to the licensing and entertainment industries. She is the former Executive Editor of The Licensing Letter.

Meena Comes To A Store Near You ... If You Live in South Asia

by Christian Clark

Yehi hai right choice, Baby. Un Huh!" sing two young rag-pickers as they wade through a heap of rubbish, gathering scraps of metal, paper and old bottles to sell in New Delhi, the bustling capital of India. Hips swinging and voices raised, the children seem to be caught in a spirited bubble which, for an instant, was lifting them above the dirt and filth on which they danced. Listening to these children sing out with spontaneous, joyous abandon makes one smile and then wonder at the incongruity of it all: for they are, in fact, warbling the television advertising slogan for Pepsi Cola, the giant American pop drink company which recently entered the newly liberalized Indian market place. Television in South Asia is increasing ruling the minds and imaginations of thousands of children, regardless of their situation in life.

The series' objective is simple, if not daunting: to try to change the attitude of the region's over one billion people when it comes to how girls are treated.

The Expansion of Television

Over the last decade televi-

sion in India, like other countries in South Asia, has undergone a complete transformation, moving from a single channel, government-controlled service to a multi-channel, multi-optional, transnational programming world. In 1991, the majority of Indian viewers had access to only one government-controlled television channel with limited broadcast hours. Today in major

pop. In November, the agency is set to launch in South Asia the Meena Communication Initiative - a radically new kind of communications experiment aimed at changing the lives of girls in South Asia, a region where sex discrimination is rife.

Tools To Empower Girls

The project will take advantage of all possible media channels



Merchandise derived from UNICEF's Meena.

Indian cities, such as Bombay and New Delhi, cable networks are luring viewers with offers of 40 to 60 channels and the urban viewer is suddenly inundated with a bewildering choice of programs. The Cartoon Network has even newly arrived in Asia.

Early on in the game, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) recognized the power mass media could have in providing a catalyst for social change in South Asia - not just for selling soda

with a multimedia package featuring an animated film series co-produced with Hanna-Barbera Cartoons in Los Angeles, a 15 part radio series on the BBC's Urdu, Bengali, Hindi and Nepali World Services (reaching some 55 million people), documentaries,

comic books, posters, folk media and numerous other materials. Meena will not only be featured on television and radio, but the concept will also be integrated into the curriculums of schools throughout South Asia. Special kits will be made available for non-profit groups working on behalf of girls in India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Pakistan. Once officially launched it is expected that Meena will become not just a well-known and well-loved entertainment character for hundreds of

millions of the region's people, but also a powerful advocate for the cause of female children throughout South Asia and beyond.

Made possible through financial contributions from the Government of Norway and the UK National Committee for UNICEF, the initiative illustrates how creative and exciting stories can be used to promote social issues in an appealing and provocative way. The experiences and acute observations of Meena, a spunky ten-year-old South Asian heroine, and her parrot Mithu, not only expose the discrimination against girls in her family and community life, but also offer positive, achievable solutions, through an example of the empowerment of girls and women. Clearly, the *Meena* series represents a new approach to communication on the girl child issue. The series' objective is simple, if not daunting: to try to change the attitude of the region's over one billion people when it comes to how girls are treated.

UNICEF Goes Commercial

The Meena initiative is also a radical departure from traditional communication projects in the non-profit sector. It has been designed to be ultimately self-financing. As a result, after the launch the project is planned to move out of UNICEF and be set up as a quasi-independent foundation in its own right. While UNICEF, in the short term, will retain the copyright and trademark

of Meena, the foundation will likely have its own administration and finances overseen by a steering

project will promote girls' rights and excellence in children's media in the region.

It is a historic undertaking. To sustain such an ambitious project, UNICEF, for the first time in the United Nation's history, is planning to "commercialize" a project. Merchandising and licensing the Meena brand, syndicating the animated programs, as well as local sponsorships and "tie-ups," are all expected to come on-stream after the launch. The project is taking a long term commercial view, for it is recognized that changing the societal position and view of female children is a long-term endeavor.

Already in Bangladesh, Meena textiles, ceramics, dolls, writing products and greeting cards have been successfully pilot marketed and educational games are currently pending. The branding and merchandising of Meena in this way will achieve two important objectives: it will promote her image as a popular character and, as importantly, will raise income for funding the project's future activities.

Elsewhere in the region, research has indicated that this is "do-able." A 1997 survey in India, for example, found tremendous commercial potential for the Meena brand in that country. A recent study by Thunderbird, The

American Graduate School of International Management Department of World Business, in Arizona, a top business university for international management in the U.S., came to a similar conclusion.



Meena in a scene from the episode *Count Your Chickens*. © UNICEF.

committee of major stakeholders including the United Nations, governments in the region, private sector media partners and non-profit groups working with and on behalf of girls in the region. To put it into an animation industry perspective, the foundation will operate some-



A school in Bangladesh painted with Meena murals.

thing like the U.S.-based Children's Television Workshop which produces the popular children's television show *Sesame Street*. One key difference: instead of promoting numeracy and literacy, the Meena

As a result, last year the business school helped UNICEF develop full-fledged business plans for promoting Meena in the four countries involved in the project.

It is estimated that there are some 300 million people in the middle class consumer market in South



A group of young Indian girls read a Meena storybook. The protagonist is designed to be a role model for female children

Asia to which the Meena merchandise such as clothing, dishware, games, greeting cards, school bags, lunch boxes and pencils, could appeal. The project will also seek to extend UNICEF advocacy and program communication for girls through the marketing of a package of materials (such as videos, comic books, posters and facilitators' guides) built around *Meena* stories and characters.

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A Strategy With Barriers

The pilot market study in Bangladesh has already helped UNICEF develop a merchandising strategy in that country which will reach not only the middle-class but also low-income urban and rural markets. The results showed that

careful product placement could achieve a sustained market interest, especially amongst middle-class consumers. The strategy for UNICEF then is multi-fold:

- To promote the Meena concept through a wide range of electronic and non-electronic communication materials.
- To, along with Government agencies, outside non-profit groups and private sector partners, promote the wide scale use of the Meena Communication Package.
- To develop Meena commercial products and license the Meena image, in collaboration with both non-profit producer groups and the commercial sector.
- To implement completed commercial strategies and business plans in order to promote Meena products in both urban and rural markets.

The commercial survey recently completed in India concluded that the gross proceeds coming from the sales in India alone from just 11 Meena products could be as much as U.S. \$6 million in the first three years following the launch. That's the good news. The report cautions, however, to see this a reality UNICEF would need to invest U.S. \$1.4 million in an advertising campaign to initially build awareness of the Meena brand. The advertising budget is arguably on the high side as an agency such as UNICEF could probably obtain free advertising on products at the end of each *Meena* television episode.

Even if a commercial partner

was found to aid UNICEF in the commercialization of Meena, the marketing of cartoon characters in South Asia continues to be a hard sell. Ask Disney, which had to scale back efforts in India this year after running into a multitude of problems. Foremost among the problems UNICEF faces is the fact that chain stores are virtually non-existent, and distribution channels nationally and regionally continue to be archaic.

It is estimated that there are some 300 million people in the middle class consumer market in South Asia to which the Meena merchandise ... could appeal.

There is one bright spot on the horizon though. Commercial surveys have repeatedly found consumers in the region are willing to pay more for products with the well known UNICEF logo on them. The agency has high name recognition and is acknowledged to be doing a lot for the region's children. It remains to be seen, however, if the organization can be as successful in commerce as they have been for kids.

Christian Clark is a former cartoonist and a two-time Emmy award-winning writer for the children's television show Sesame Street. He is currently the head of the Meena Communication Initiative in UNICEF's regional office for South Asia located in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Licensing, Merchandising and Production: An Interview With Robby London

by Heather Kenyon

What comes first today - the show or the licensing and the merchandising? It is a chicken vs. the egg question that varies from show to show. Nowhere are the impacts of licensing and merchandising as heavily felt as in the realm of production. I was able to speak to Robby London, Senior Vice President, Creative Affairs for DIC Entertainment, Inc. to glean just how important L&M is to getting a production in the works and off the ground. DIC is certainly one of the largest players when it comes to producing shows that are accompanied with aggressive licensing/merchandising campaigns. DIC has worked with major fast food chains like McDonalds, Burger King, Pizza Hut, Subway, and such major retailers as K-Mart, J.C. Penny, Toys R Us and Walmart.

Heather Kenyon: What is your role here at DIC?

Robby London: My personal role? Let me start with the title, which is Senior Vice President, Creative Affairs. So, nominally, I'm in charge of keeping a creative overview on everything the company does, and a consistency. Really I deal with all of our shows from inception through execution. Obviously we do so many shows, we normally do 200 half-hours, it's very hard to keep a hands-on overview of those things. I tend to be more involved at the beginning of the shows — getting them launched, getting

them underway, putting good people on them and letting them run themselves. I'm also peripherally involved in the marketing venture as well.

HK: How did kids television shows used to be financed vs. today?

RL: That's my area of expertise. Basically, it used to be very strongly a domestic U.S. network business.



**Robby London, Senior Vice President,
Creative Affairs, DIC Entertainment.**

Cartoons as a Saturday morning staple started in the late '60s, '70s. At that time, there were three networks: ABC, CBS, NBC. They were all on Saturday morning. There were very few studios producing at that time too. Basically, Filmation and Hanna-Barbera were doing the bulk of the things. Networks would

basically pay a license fee that would cover the costs of the show. So, the producer could get their costs covered simply with the U.S. network license fee, and any other revenues that could be generated on their show was gravy. The international licensing, merchandising, all those things were just profits to the studios. It was a very good business because there was basically no risk. The worst that you could do was break even. And mostly, you would make money. That changed radically — and I mean radically — in the '80s. It's gotten to the point now — the pendulum has swung so far the other way—that frankly, in many cases, the domestic license fees are a relatively small part of the cost of a production. Two areas in particular—international and licensing and merchandising—have become far more critical and crucial to getting a show financed. Does that address the question?

HK: Yes. I didn't want to lead you, but it does seem that L&M is playing a much larger, more significant role...

RL: There's no question. It used to be gravy. Now it's almost the main course in a sense, because without it, it's just difficult to be. At the same time that the domestic license fees have gone down, the cost of production, particularly in the last two or three years...this last year in particular there has been such a huge demand for artists...has gone up.

So many people now are getting into animation, and its been like another one of those "gold rush" eras. Its very cyclical. I've been in the business enough years now to recognize and absolutely not be phased by the cyclical nature of it. But I must say this particular cycle of the last two years, in terms of demand for artists, and artists' salaries, and competition amongst the suppliers has been just intense, so the costs have risen. Obviously, theres more outlets now, but the amount you get from each outlet, the license fees, are down. Many of the broadcast outlets are owned by vertically integrated companies that have their own animation units. DIC is in a very hard-to-describe mode, because on one hand we're part of the Disney Company, but in some ways we have to function very much as an independent company. Our shows have to compete in the marketplace. For independent producers now, it is very, very difficult to put all the pieces together and make the business work in a viable way.

It's gotten to the point now ... that frankly, in many cases, the domestic license fees are a relatively small part of the cost of a production.

HK: That's what I was going to ask. Isn't licensing and merchandising almost more important for an independent company? They need the revenues more?

RL: Yes, yes, yes. I don't mean not to elaborate and just give you a "yes" answer, but that's right. I'm not going to elaborate on that, because that's exactly right.

Let me go back for a minute. I have something else. Besides the financial importance of licensing and merchandising, theres another very, very large role it plays. There are so many kids' properties for kids' eyeballs, for kids' attention, not just animated shows, and not just television shows. We have the Internet, video games, home video, music. Kids are assaulted with people that want their attention today, and enterprises that want their attention. God forbid you talk about sports, hiking and the healthy things in life! Its really difficult to get attention for any kind of property you're launching. If you try to launch a property simply on television, even if it was completely paid for, its very difficult to make a splash. The other huge role of licensing and merchandising now is that its kind of an ancillary support and promotion for a television property. And its symbiotic. It goes the other way around, too. There are so many licensed properties out there, they need the television. You need to have kind of a "Normandy Invasion" to make a splash, and to be heard above the noise. Theres so much noise, you gotta just do a big "bang" or you'll drown. I think that's a real, real important role of licensing and merchandising.

HK: How has the role of L&M actually changed production?

RL: Interesting question. Again, thinking cyclically, I was involved in one of the first really big toy-driven series, which was *He-Man and the Masters of the Universe*. In the early days of toy-driven shows, there was the first wave of them, I think there was a very rigid, unimaginative application of how merchandise was incorporated into shows. It was

sort of done by rote, and the toy executives would count the number of times that you mentioned the name of the toy, and the number of toy appearances. There were charts counting, you know, "We used this vehicle in this scene..." It became very intrusive on the creative process. Intrusive to the point that you would have these shows come out that were almost unwatchable, because they were so clearly [promoting the merchandise]. Every piece of dialogue mentioned the toy name. It would be like if I said, "Heather" in every sentence. It was awkward, and kids, god bless them, have a radar. They can just tell when they're being sold to and pandered to, and you're not observing the principles of good storytelling. A lot of those early shows that were financed by toy companies, and toy-driven, sort of had a heavy-handed approach to putting product in shows, and they failed. They failed miserably. Nobody watched them, and at the same time, of course, finally, the toys failed.

For independent producers now, it is very, very difficult to put all the pieces together and make the business work in a viable way.

I think now theres sort of what I consider to be a new wave, sort of the enlightened era of intelligently trying to mesh merchandising with storytelling. I find now that most of the executives in merchandising and at the toy companies are far more savvy and far more sensitive. They grasp the concept that you have to make a good show first. You have to tell a good story, have compelling characters, and not be

counting how many times the vehicle makes an appearance, or how many times you say its name. They realize they'd much rather have a "hit." They'd much rather have a show that kids can flow their imaginations into, and fantasize about, and role-play, and just be swept into that show. And they realize that people making the shows have a better chance of knowing how to do that than the toy company people. It's far more flexible now. It's being done in a far more intelligent way. The long answer to your question is that I find this kind of licensing and merchandising to be far less intrusive in this day and age, than it has been in the past. I find that in a way, the application of it is far more intelligent and actually can help the shows in some ways, because it's being done judiciously and intelligently.

HK: It seems that a lot more is being done when toys are packaged, even when they may not be directly related to the show, they're in packaging that kind of looks like the show, or they have "Nickelodeon splats" on them and as a result kids want them. So it's more that it doesn't have to be the exact toy that's in the show, as long as it's packaged with that artwork, and is somehow related in a kid's mind.

The other huge role of licensing and merchandising now is that it's kind of an ancillary support and promotion for a television property.

RL: I don't disagree with you. I don't know if what you say is accurate or not because I don't really pay attention to whether the toys correspond

to the shows. But I do know that packaging clearly ties into tie-ins and capitalizes on the logos. Kids typically are really into authenticity. They know logos. Nick is a perfect example. Nick has absolutely permeated the kid culture as a brand. As Disney has. Of course, Disney is the king of that. But Nick has become a kid's brand and kids know brands. They know logos. They know when things are authentic. They know the difference between Disney's "Little Mermaid" and Saban's "Little Mermaid." They know and they want the real thing. I think clearly merchandisers and marketers understand that dynamic of kids and take advantage of the logos, and any kind of tie-in. When something on television, it takes on a larger than life presence. For all of us, not just kids. I think that's a very human thing. There's something about TV, it's a magic. When something is on TV, it has been elevated to a larger than life status. Any way that merchandisers can legitimately take advantage of the TV connection, I think they do it. They put it on their packaging and I think that helps them to move their product.

HK: When do you start? When a show goes into development, when do you start working with the toy companies and manufacturers? Who designs the vehicle, and decides, "Yes! That makes a great toy and a great vehicle for our show..." How does that work?

RL: It depends on the show. There are certain shows that feel more "toy-etic." That's a new word from the toy industry, thank you very much. It makes a difference if you know who your partner is, and, sometimes you do, sometimes you don't. In the case of *Mummies Alive!*

which is a show that we're launching this fall, it was an idea that we created at DIC, along with Ivan Reitman, we presented it very early on to Hasbro, very early. They really saw the potential for it and felt it was a great idea that would get kids' imagination and get kids' fantasy, and really press those archetypal buttons for kids. They kind of signed aboard at that point. We didn't have toys per se, but they liked the concept. Once we knew they were going to be the toy company involved with this, we did work with them. We traded designs back and forth, we took some input from them, they took some from us. At the end of the day, we are both marketing to the same audience, we're just marketing different products, but there are certain consistencies. In this new enlightened age of toy company/TV producer communication, it works very well.

I think now there's sort of what I consider to be a new wave, sort of the enlightened era of intelligently trying to mesh merchandising with storytelling.

HK: Do you feel—and I certainly have seen it with the kids in our family—that if the toys don't live up to the TV show, or if they're really different, you harm the integrity of the show because kids can spot that.

RL: Not just with toys. One of the very important functions of our merchandising division here is to police our licensors to make sure that there is a consistency amongst all of the varied projects that go out. Go back to kids and they're craving authen-

ticity. Kids notice when Inspector Gadget doesn't look right in the coloring book. So, its very important to perpetuate the fantasy of these characters being real. When they start to appear differently, it breaks the illusion. It breaks the reality; the fantasy that you can believe in these characters. I think you'll find that most licensors believe that. That's a major role of most companies' licensing divisions. Obviously, though, a toy can only look so much like a 2D animated character, but you do what you can. We supply our licensing division these massive style guides. This is the style guide that we did for *The New Kids on the Block* series. It has everything, how to draw, storylines, how the characters behave, the logos. It's totally comprehensive and we still police it. When a licensee is ready with the coffee mug, they have to submit a prototype to us, for our evaluation and approval. Even with all the stuff that we give them in advance, we make sure that they conform.

HK: How much does licensing and merchandising influence the con-

tent of childrens programming?

RL: That's a very loaded question.

I don't see anything intrinsically evil about the concept of merchandise.

People are ready to sort of attack the concept that childrens television is nothing more than an extended commercial to sell merchandise. I really, really take issue with that concept. I think you should come at it from a point of view that kids have a right to be entertained. The way kids entertain themselves is they watch shows, play video games, and they play with toys. Their toy-playing, I feel, is enhanced, and I think most people would agree, if they have a whole set of characters, stories, worlds, and a background to help facilitate and stimulate their play. So, I don't see anything intrinsically evil about the concept of merchandise. I think what's very detrimental to kids and to the industry is when merchandise takes such a heavy-handed role that it hurts the storytelling. I think the free market has policed that because I think the

properties that so blatantly tried to manipulate kids, those properties failed. I think for the most part now, the real key is always to be a story teller first. I think most producers are storytellers, that's what they do. I mean, I write. My background is as a writer. Andy Heyward [President and Chief Executive Officer of DIC], his background is as a writer. Certainly speaking for DIC, we value storytelling more than anything else. We also value merchandise, and I think its very organic and natural for certain kinds of stories to make kids want to play with those toys. Kids have a right to play with toys, just as we have a right to enjoy stories. Just as adults have a right to play with toys—just different toys, more expensive than most toys. He who dies with the most toys wins.

Heather Kenyon is Editor-in-Chief of Animation World Magazine.

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International Film & Programme Market
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26-30 September 1997
Palais des Festivals, Cannes, France



International Film & Programme Market
for TV, Video, Cable, Satellite, Licensing & Merchandising
4-6 December 1997
Convention and Exhibition Centre, Hong Kong



Documentary Screenings
1-2 April 1998 • Hotel Martinez, Cannes, France



International Television Programme Market
3-8 April 1998 • Palais des Festivals, Cannes, France

Europe Strikes Back

by Heikki Jokinen



Editor's Note: This month Heikki Jokinen is providing an overview of Europe's CARTOON. Next month he will review the events of the Cartoon Forum which is happening in Arles, France from September 18 - 20.

The European animation market is growing fast. In 1989, European television channels screened 18,800 hours of animation, while in 1992, 29,200 hours were shown. The animation industry has responded to the growing demand. In 1986, European studios produced 60 hours of animation. By 1995 the figure was over 700 hours.

One reason for the growth in production is CARTOON, the European Association of Animated Film. CARTOON started in February, 1988 as part of the MEDIA program of the European Union. The European Union (EU) is a community of 15 European nations, who work together on a common basis in many areas of politics and economics. MEDIA also has three additional member states that do not belong to the EU. MEDIA is a major project of the EU, helping to keep the European audiovisual industry fit in the struggle against strong film and television studios in the United

States and Asia. MEDIA's work is actually protectionism, but not through building fences rather by introducing positive measures. The EU's television directive helps to achieve the goal. It demands that in Europe at least 50% of television programs have to be of European origin.

After the five year period of MEDIA I from 1991-95, a newly organized MEDIA II started in 1996. It will work for five years with the total budget of 310 million Ecu (which stands for European Currency Unit, the official EU monetary unit which is roughly equivalent to U.S. \$1.09). Last year MEDIA II's budget was 60 million Ecu, and some four million Ecu was dedicated to animation. The major areas of MEDIA's work are in training, development and distribution.

Out of the 376 projects presented at the first six Forums, 110 were completed.

The Cartoon Forum Collects the Financiers

CARTOON works in many ways. The main event is the annual Cartoon Forum, held every autumn in a different corner of the continent. The idea is simple: to

invite producers and financiers for an effective three-day gathering. Some 70 ready-to-be-produced animation projects are presented and 70 broadcasters plus 60 investors turn their thumbs either up or down.

The results have been quite impressive since the first Cartoon Forum which was held in 1990 on the island of Lanzarote in the Canary Islands. Out of the 376 projects presented at the first six Forums, 110 were completed. This equals 435 hours of animation. At last year's Cartoon Forum, which was held in Ireland's Connemara region, 19 out of the 67 animation projects presented received immediate guarantees to go into production. As usual, most of these were French, German and British. 21 other projects received sufficient interest to go on and probably collect enough money to begin production at a later date.

CARTOON is interested in television serials and features. It does not defend animation as an art form, but rather as an important and creative part of the audiovisual industry. Every project presented at the Cartoon Forum must total at least 26 minutes, which makes it suitable for television.

Through CARTOON there is no money directly given to support



actual production. MEDIA II can grant some loans, but these have to be paid back. Twice a year CARTOON gives aid for pre-production, either for graphic design, a pilot film or script writing. The amounts vary from 5,000 Ecu to 40,000 Ecu.

Cooperation Across the Borders

The main idea of CARTOON's work is to get the European producers and animators to work together across national borders. European studios are usually very small in comparison with the big U.S. and Asian companies. The projects accepted at the Cartoon Forum must stem from a European cooperation venture between partners in two or three countries.

The main idea of CARTOON's work is to get the European producers and animators to work together across national borders.

One part of the CARTOON policy has been to form studio groupings. These are studio chains of at least three studios in different European countries that work together on joint projects. Studio groupings are an answer to the growing demand for television series. It might take three years for one studio to do a long series, but three studios can complete the project in one year. When working together with other studios, down

time between productions can also be shortened.

During the MEDIA I years of 1988-95, ten studio groupings were formed, with some financial help from CARTOON. These groupings included 38 different studios in ten countries. Support for studio groupings is still in the CARTOON agenda. It believes firmly that "the growth of European animation will have to be developed by constituting large



The Old Lady and the Pigeons by Sylvain Chomet, winner of the Cartoon d'Or for 1997

industrial groups," as the CARTOON magazine states in its May, 1997 issue.

Training and the Job Bank

Another key area of CARTOON's work is training, which is also one of the main areas of the entire MEDIA II program. Nearly 3,000 professionals participated in the 102 different courses and seminars organized by CARTOON during the years 1988-95. This year, CARTOON is packaging together ten seminars under the title CARTOON Business School. The chain of seminars covers management, training for trainers, script writing and multimedia.

For studios about to go into production CARTOON offers in-house training. 21 different courses, many of them related to new technologies, are available. There are, however, voices that are concerned about the flow of well educated animation artists to U.S. studios. The reason is simple: a steady job and often a better salary. This was visible at the last Annecy festival - the

recruiting staffs of big U.S. studios had long lines of animators at their doors.

CARTOON works to find jobs for animators as well. The CARTOON Job Bank is a database with hundreds of jobs on offer. During the past two years, the Bank has provided access to over 1,000 employment opportunities.

During the past two years, the Bank has provided access to over 1,000 employment opportunities.

Cartoon d'Or is CARTOON's annual prize of 35,000 Ecu given to a short animation. The winner is selected from films that have received prizes in one of the eight European animation festivals cooperating with CARTOON. The prize money has to be used on a new film and this time, the length has to be suitable for a normal television programming slot. On the top of all these activities, CARTOON has initiated several surveys, pilot projects, publications and competitions. Currently, they are working on proposals for a film to promote the Euro, the future joint EU-currency.

To be continued...

Heikki Jokinen is a freelance journalist and critic specializing in animation, short film and comics. He lives in Helsinki, Finland and is a board member of ASIFA-Nordic, the ASIFA regional organization for the five Nordic and three Baltic states. The next Cartoon Forum will be the fifth one in which he has participated.

The Role of the Agent: An Experienced Expert

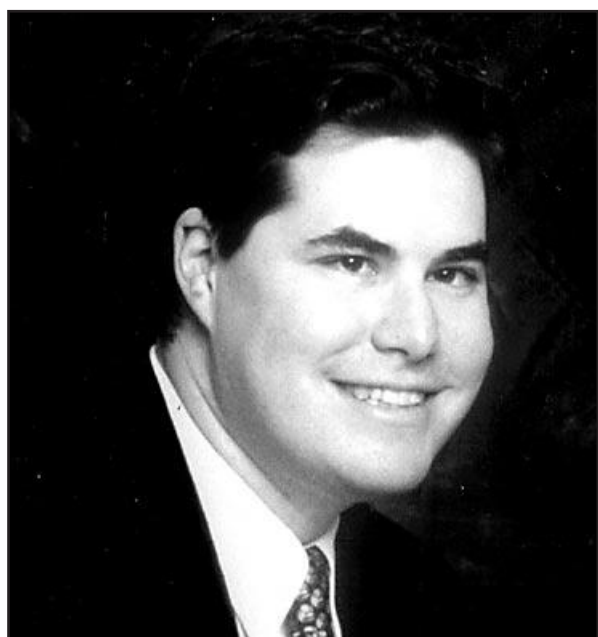
by John Goldsmith

Why do you need an agent? Why do you need someone to negotiate on your behalf, review your legal contracts and advise you in your career choices? You are smart, you understand business, you know the trajectory of your career; so why pay someone ten percent of your income to do what you can do for yourself?

Simply put, an agent is an expert, someone who deals daily in the marketplace and has a broad overview of an individual artist's

tions and financing process. After all, you don't buy a house every week, but your Realtor metaphorically does. Similarly, a talent agent with good deal flow knows what to ask on your behalf and what hard fought deal points, pioneered by other deals, can be incorporated into your contract. If I could draw or write half as well as the talent I represent, I would be in a different profession. The thing I do better than my clients, however, is negotiate on their behalf and understand the intricacies of all their deals.

whom they negotiate. A good agent will fight for your rights *hard*, but will not ask for things that are blatantly out of the realm of possibility. Think of the last time you played tennis with an amateur. I am sure you found it rather frustrating as you never knew how the ball would come back across the net. Similarly, business affairs executives like negotiating with experienced agents rather than talent. At least with two experienced professionals negotiating there is a rhythm and efficiency that eliminates ambiguity and hidden problems.



John Goldsmith.

place within the context of an entire industry. A good agent is a specialist, who knows the craft of the deal as well as the temperature of the marketplace. If you are buying a house you would likely use a Realtor to guide you through the negotia-

tions and financing process. After all, you don't buy a house every week, but your Realtor metaphorically does. Similarly, a talent agent with good deal flow knows what to ask on your behalf and what hard fought deal points, pioneered by other deals, can be incorporated into your contract. If I could draw or write half as well as the talent I represent, I would be in a different profession. The thing I do better than my clients, however, is negotiate on their behalf and understand the intricacies of all their deals.

Another critical reason to have an agent is that people like dealing with people they have dealt with in the past. A good agent has a cordial relationship with the business affairs executives against

Agency Benefits

A good agency creates packaging opportunities and synergy among their clients. Being a part of an agency also enhances networking by affording you greater contact with your contemporaries. A good agency should function like a club with the agent introducing you to your peers and encouraging clients to work together. An agent who places a story editor on a show then has opportunities to influence his client to hire other agency clients to write indi-

A good agent is a specialist, who knows the craft of the deal as well as the temperature of the marketplace.

As the cliché goes, a lawyer who represents himself has a fool for a client. That same adage applies to talent who represent themselves and are forced to talk business rather than creative issues. In doing this they either do not push hard enough for a fair deal or they push too hard and alienate the executives with whom they are working. Agents play the role of "bad cop," allowing talent to get what they want without damaging their professional relationships. Further, most studios will not deal with talent unless they are represented. The reasons for this are threefold. An agent serves as a pre-screener for the studio. Generally, studio executives know that, if a well respected agent

sends in a client, that client has the creative endorsement of the agency. Secondly, there is the issue of copyright protection. Studios are wrongly sued for copyright infringement with great frequency. With an agent in the picture, this concern is assuaged as there is a third party that can trace the history of a project. Finally, an agent will assure that negotiations will proceed in a professional manner rather than bogging down in unimportant or irrelevant issues.

If your agent is not returning your calls, not presenting you with job opportunities...you probably should be looking for a new representative.

There are differences between an agent, a lawyer and a manager. Generally, lawyers work on an hourly basis or typically charge five percent of a client's income. Managers commonly charge ten to fifteen percent of a client's income and agents, whose fees are governed by the state, charge a maximum of ten percent of a client's income. If you are at the height of your career and a common name in the industry, all you may need is a lawyer to negotiate your deals. Similarly, if you have found your own work and only need someone to review paperwork, a lawyer is the economic choice. If you demand a great deal of attention and a creative sounding board, a manager can be considered. Generally, managers have fewer clients than agents, give more personal attention and occasionally produce alongside their clients.

An Ace or a Washout?

A good agent is a hybrid of a lawyer and a manager. Some agents think they are lawyers and

are just interested in making the deals that a client brings them, while others spend a great deal of time acting like managers and talking with their clients about their goals and ideas. Good agents fall between these two points of view. An agent should spend time finding work, negotiating deals (often in conjunction with lawyers) and most essentially, guiding a client's career through encouragement and providing opportunities for creative growth.

So how can you tell if your agent is an ace or a washout? The key is personal attention and an understanding of your artistic vision. An agent's stock and trade is numbers and contracts, but they must never forget that their primary concern is the advancement of their client's careers and the protection of their artistic needs. A good agent should always be available to talk and be on the constant prowl for new employment opportunities for his clients, empowered by a thorough understanding of a client's dreams and overall professional goals. If your agent is not returning your calls, not presenting you with job opportunities, and most importantly, does not understand you and your unique aspirations, you probably should be looking for a new representative.

Our ethos, and that of any good agent, is to take the long view and map out a client's career strategy.

How Do I Get One?

How do you get an agent when just beginning a career? Say you are new in the business and want to get into the studios. All you hear is that you need an agent to

submit your materials. You can't get anyone to return your calls after the job fairs and entertainment expos. The key is to make friends with anybody you can in the business, especially writers and artists, and have an established talent champion your cause with their agent or other professionals in the business. With this done, go out and interview agents. At my agency we only consider taking on new clients who are recommended by our current clients. We screen talent for the studios while our clients screen talent for us. A gifted individual who is recommended by one of our writers, artists or show-runners is always someone we are very interested to talk with about the possibility of representation. Seek out the agent who understands your artistic vision and career goals, not the one who promises you they can get the best monetary deal. An agent who has passion for his client always gets a better deal. It may sound self-serving, but the ten percent you pay to an agent is almost always money well spent. For example, at my shop, if we cannot improve a client's deal enough to justify our commission we are happy to take less than a standard fee.

Our ethos, and that of any good agent, is to take the long view and map out a client's career strategy. Then we provide opportunities for that client so that he can fulfill his artistic and professional aspirations over the long term.

John Goldsmith is a principle of Metropolis, an agency specializing in the representation of animation talent. Mr. Goldsmith also runs Metropolis Animation, a production company associated with Columbia/TriStar Television.

KROK '97: A Long Voyage Down the River Dnjeper

by oTTo Alder



Nunmehr zum vierten Mal fand vom 11. bis 25. August 1997 das geheimnisumwobene KROK (Schritt) Festival, das unter vorgehaltener Hand als das Beste Animationsfilm Festival überhaupt gehandelt wird, in der Ukraine statt.

Was ist das besondere an KROK? Zuallererst wäre da die Tatsache zu nennen, dass das Festival auf einem Schiff (benannt nach dem im II. Weltkrieg gegen die Deutschen erfolgreichen Marschall der Sowjetarmee Koshewoy) stattfindet, das in Kiew ablegt und sich dann dem mächtigen Strom Dnjeper hingebend bis ins Schwarze Meer hintreibt. Also ein Festival in ständiger Bewegung. Nicht ortsgebunden. Ein schwimmendes Festival. Im wahrsten Sinne des Wortes auch deshalb, da sein finanzieller, organisatorischer und politischer Bestand immer bis einen Tag vor Beginn der Veranstaltung selbst der talentierten Chefin Irina Kaplytchnaya unsicher und offen bleibt.

Besonders an KROK ist auch die Tatsache, dass sich auf dem Schiff für zwei Wochen nur professionelle Gäste (Regisseure, Kameraleute, Animatoren, Journalisten, Kritiker,

Festivalorganisatoren, Sponsoren etc.) befinden, die die Filmprogramme im schiffseigenen Kino sehen. Und es ist schon einmalig, auf der Leinwand Animation zu sehen, der durch das sanfte wiegen und schaukeln des Kinos eine weitere Dimension aneigen wird.

Wann immer das Festival in einen Hafen der grossen Städte entlang des Dnjeper einläuft schwirren die rührigen Organisatoren sofort mit einer guten Ladung Animation an Land, um diese dann in einem rammel vollen Kino vor 500 begeisterten Kinder und Eltern vorzuführen. Gleichzeitig finden für die Lokale Presse Treffen mit Filmemachern und Organisatoren statt. Den Gästen des Schiffs, die nicht an diesen Aktivitäten teilnehmen bietet das Festival Exkursionen durch die jeweilige Stadt oder bietet Besuche in Museen an. Zurück auf dem Schiff, haben emsige Hände schon wieder die Tische im Restaurant gedeckt und das Essen zubereitet. Und das drei Mal am Tag für zwei Schichten ausgehungert Festivalgäste.

Dass das Festival ein ukrainisch russisches Gemeinschaftsunternehmen ist

aber auf Ukrainischen Wasser und Land stattfindet ist eine weitere Besonderheit. Dies Gemeinschaft symbolisieren die zwei Festivalpräsidenten. David Cherkasky ist Ukrainer und Eduard Nazarow ist Russe! Würden die Politiker auch so handeln hätten wir weniger Probleme auf dieser Welt. Natürlich demonstriert diese Bilateralität auch den Gedanken, dass Animation eine eigenständige Kunstform ist, die keine Grenzen kennt.

Die Galionsfigur des Festivals Fedor Chitruk, der leider an der Teilnahme verhindert war schrieb in seiner Botschaft: 'Animators are a special breed. One reason for this is the art itself, the mystery of which has yet to be solved.'

Noch zu erwähnen ist, dass kein anderes mir bekanntes Festival den Begriff der Animation so weit fast. KROK zeigt nicht nur eine feine Selektion von künstlerischen



Was ist das besondere an KROK? Zuallererst wäre da die Tatsache zu nennen, dass das Festival auf einem Schiff. Photo © oTTo Alder.

Animationsfilmen. Das Rahmenprogramm ist kulturell so breit angelegt (Diskussion, Musik, Satire, Karneval, Tanz, Essen, Trinken, Museen, etc.) dass auch alle anderen Künste nicht zu kurz kommen: KROK ist selber eine Animation!

Um ein wenig konkreter zu werden und dem Leser einen Einblick in das Festivalgeschehen zu vermitteln, erlaube ich mir nachfolgend die Zeit auf dem Schiff mit meinen, sicherlich sehr subjektiven und bescheidenen Tagebuchaufzeichnungen zu beschreiben. Somit handelt es sich nachfolgend auch nicht um eine Festivalberichterstattung.

Montag 11. August

Durch Zufall begegne ich meinem Freund Paul Bush aus London (*Still Life With A Small Cup*, GB, 1996) auf dem Züricher Flughafen. Im selben Flugzeug treffen wir in Kiew ein, wo wir von Galina und Alexander empfangen werden. Nachdem Chris Shepherd (*The Broken Jaw*, GB, 1997) Pedro Serrazina (*The Tale About The Cat And The Moon*, Portugal 1995), Stefanie Dinklebach (*The Imperial Message*, Irland, 1996) kurze Zeit später direkt aus London eintrafen, bringt uns ein Festivalbus in den Kiewer Hafen, wo das Schiff 'Marschall Koshewoy' schon auf uns wartet.

Auf dem Deck findet der Eröffnungsempfang statt. Hier trifft man zum ersten mal auf die weit über 300 Gäste. Es ist mild und mit der heraufziehenden Dunkelheit überschüttet der Mond die ganze festliche Szenerie mit kristallinem Licht. Der Empfang löst sich auf und

geht nahtlos über in einen heiteren Tanz unter freiem Sternenhimmel.

Im Kino wird das Eröffnungsprogramm, welches am Nachmittag in einem Kiewer Kino vor 600 Besuchern gezeigt wurde, wiederholt. Höhepunkt des Programms ist der neue Film von Andrei Khrzhanovsky, *Long Voyages*. Tonino Guerra (langjähriger Drehbuchautor von Federico Fellini) hat es zusammen mit Andrei Khrzhanovsky geschrieben. Der Film basiert auf Zeichnungen von Fellini. Maestro, der Held des Films sticht in See um eine herrliche Insel zu erreichen. Tonino Guerra, der Gast auf dem KROK Schiff ist, entführt uns in die Welt der Fellinische Frauenbilder. Ein Film der geradezu speziell für das KROK Festival gemacht zu sein scheint.



oTTo Alder. Photo © Paul Bush.

Das plötzliche vibrieren des Schiffs und der Tanzfläche signalisiert uns das KROK ablegt und unter Sternen klarer Nacht Kiew entflucht. In der Bar, im Cafe und auf dem Deck wird getanzt, gesungen, gesprochen bis die Nacht in den neuen Tag übergeht.

Dienstag 12. August

Eine sanfte russische Frauenstimme holt mich aus meinen Träumen und erinnert daran, dass es Frühstück gibt und um 10 Uhr der zweite Wettbewerb läuft. Die weichen Gartenstühle mit denen das Kino bestückt ist passen sich dem sanften Schaukeln des

Schiffes an und entführen uns in *Flat World*. Der neue Film des Briten Daniel Greaves, der mit *Manipulation* 1991 einen Oscar einheimste. Der technisch innovative und erzählerisch furiose Film über Matt Phlatt, seine Katze und seinen gierigen Fisch, versetzt das vollgestopfte und völlig überhitzte Kino in schallendes Gelächter. Obwohl der Film mit seiner Botschaft (Fernsehen sei langweilig und leistet nur der Verblödung vorschub) nichts neues erzählt, lässt sich das Publikum mit grossem Spass durch den brillant animierten Film gerne wiederholen.

Im Gegensatz dazu holte der Film *Under The Waxing Moon* des Belgiers Hans Spilliaert der die massenhafte Verfrachtung von Rindern zur Schlachtung auf fragwürdige Weise mit dem Holocaust auf eine Ebene setzt, das Publikum jäh zurück in die Realität. Danach im selben Programm noch witzige Filme zu programmieren (Alexander Tatarskys *Pilot Brothers*) geht nicht mehr und wird dann eher eine Zumutung.

Die Selektion für den Wettbewerb wurde von Youri Norstein, Natalya Loukinykh, Boris Pawlow (alle Russland), Jiri Kubichek (Tschechien), Svetlana Kutsenko, Alexander Shpilyuk (beide Ukraine) und Kurine Zereteli (Georgien) vorgenommen. Von ca. 380 eingereichten Filmen wurden 120 im Wettbewerb gezeigt.

Aufziehende Wolken, Regen und Nebel treiben die Gäste in den Bauch des Schiffs. Dort kann man Michael Aldashin beim Gitarrenspiel, begleitet von Ivan Maximovs Gesang lauschen. Heute findet die Party unter Deck in der Bar und im Cafe statt.

Mittwoch 13. August

Trotz Tanzen Singen, Lachen,

Trinken, und Reden bis in den frühen Morgen, füllt sich das Kino bis auf den letzten Platz. Zwei Wettbewerbsprogramm sind zu sehen. *Icar* (Ungarn 1996) von Geza Toth, eine dreidimensionale Sandanimation visualisiert den alten Traum der Menschheit vom Fliegen. Ein wenig kunsthandwerklich aber technisch überzeugend. Dieser Film ist der int. Jury (Raoul Servais (Belgien); Igor Volchek (Weissrussland); Natalya Orlowa (Russland); Monique Renault (Niederlande) und Natalya Chernyshova (Ukraine), ein Diplomawert.



KROK International Jury: Monique Renault, Raoul Servais, Natalya Orlowa, Igor Volchek, Natalya Chernyshova. Photo © oTTo Alder.

Der Film $E=mc^2$ ebenfalls eine Sandanimation von der Ukrainerin Ala Churikova erzählte von der Geburt der Liebe, der Welt und der Selbstzerstörung. Eigentlich eine Fabel in der zwei Fische zueinander finden und sich am Ende gegenseitig tödlich bekämpfen.

Höhepunkt der zwei Programme für mich aber war der Film *Golosa* (*Voices*) den die zwei Moskauer Künstler Dimitry Rezchikov und Alexander Ratnowsky 1995 in der klassischen Cartoontechnik herstellten. Beide Regisseure erlernten ihr Handwerk im Moskauer Pilot Studio unter Alexander Tatarsky, bevor sie dann 1994 ihr eigenes Studio unter dem Namen 'DEVON' ins Leben riefen.

Es ist unserer bornierten Fixiertheit auf westliche Kultur zu verdanken, dass russische Popkultur bei uns so gut wie unbekannt ist. *Voices*, ein Musicvideo für den gleichnamigen Song der populären russischen Sängerin Nastya Polewa. Aber auch die animierten Clips *Acid Wine* und *Beasts* aus dem gleichen Studio, übertreffen technisch, formal und ästhetisch in ihrer klaren Konzeption die oft überfinanzierten Produkte aus dem Westen spielend.

Donnerstag 14. August

Die KROK-Gäste scheinen keinen Schlaf zu kennen. Wieder tanzte das Festival bis tief in den Morgen. Der Himmel über der Ukraine ist wieder sonnenklar. KROK legt im Hafen von Kherson an. Nach dem Wettbewerb bringt ein Boot die ganze Gesellschaft auf eine Insel, wo uns ein Picknick geboten wird und ein Massenschwimmen stattfindet. Abgekühlt vom Schwimmen, stellen sich die Filmemacher den allabendlichen Fragen der Journalisten und Kritiker. Gleichzeitig tanzen auf dem Deck die jüngeren Gäste zu harten Techno Rythmen. Die 'Aelteren' treibt es in die Bar zu live vorgetragener Musik aus der Ukraine. Der Pianist und die Sängerin lassen das Publikum nicht vor fünf Uhr in der Früh zur Ruhe kommen. Im Cafe am anderen Ende des Schiffs spielen manche Karten, andere Diskutieren heftig bis spät in die Nacht. Und dort in der anderen Ecke des Cafes wird herzlich gelacht.

Das 50 Angestellte des Schiffs (vom Kapitän bis zum Koch) Tag und Nacht für das Wohl der Gäste sorgen fällt überhaupt nicht auf. Alles läuft wie am Schnürchen.

Freitag 15. August

Nach dem Frühstück macht

das Festival im Hafen von Odessa fest. Paul Bush ist heute besonders elegant gekleidet. Sicherlich ist dies damit zu erklären, dass sein Film heute im Wettbewerb läuft. Paul ist nicht nur zum Vergnügen auf dem Schiff. Er nutzt jede freie Minute um an seinem neuen Film zu arbeiten. Da er die Kratztechnik (scratch technique) anwendet, passt sein Studio (Lichttisch, belichtetes 35mm Material und Werkzeug) spielend in sein Handgepäck. *The Rime of The Ancient Mariner* so der Titel seines Projekts, wir die Visuallisierung und Interpretation eines Gedichts von Samuel Tayler Coleridge, das dieser 1820 schrieb. Der Film wird 15 Minuten lang und soll im nächsten Jahr fertiggestellt sein. Immerhin hat Paul Bush bis dahin noch weitere 5.000 Bilder zu kratzen. Keine leichte Arbeit wenn man berücksichtigt, dass er an einem Bild manchmal bis zu fünf Stunden arbeitet.

Trotz strahlender Sonne ziehen sich dunkle Wolken über KROK zusammen. Das Mitglied der Jury, Igor Volchek musste wegen Problemen mit dem Magen ins Krankenhaus gebracht werden. Aus Moskau kam die traurige Nachricht, dass Vadim Kurtchevsky, herausragender Regisseur von vielen populären sowjetischen Filmen in der letzten Nacht gestorben ist. Viele seiner Freunde sind an Bord. Die Trauer zieht sich durch das ganze Schiff und ist in die Gesichter der Menschen geschrieben.

Der Blick vom Deck bietet einen einmaligen Blick auf die durch Sergei M. Eisensteins Film *Battleship Potjomkin* zu weltberühmtheit gelangte Hafentreppe von Odessa. Kein Besucher des Festivals lies es sich entgehen, diese Stufen hinauf in die Stadt zu nehmen. Es scheint, dass die schöne, picturesque und südländisch anmutende Stadt

Odessa die Trauer aus den Gesichtern der Festivalbesucher wehte.

Nach dem Abendessen läuft im Wettbewerb der Langfilm *Katherina & Witt* (Deutschland, 100 Min., 1997) von Mariola Brillowska und Charles Kissing. Mit brutalen, auf wesentliche Symbole reduzierten Bildern erzählt der Film eine Abenteuer- und Liebesgeschichte von zwei Interpol Agenten, die dabei sind, den grössten Kunstraub aller Zeiten aufzuklären. Der dialog- und textlastige Film übt harsche Kritik an der Kommerzialisierung der Kunst Kunsthandel und wirft viele berechnete Fragen über die 'wahre' Bedeutung von Kunst in der heutigen Gesellschaft auf. Meine Befürchtung aber ist, dass *Katherina & Witt* selber ein Objekt des zwielichtigen Kunstmarkts und des dazugehörigen Subventionismus, wie er im Film selber kritisiert wird, sein könnte.

Als kultureller Höhepunkt des Rahmenprogramms galt die Lesung eines populärer Odessaer Satiriker im Kino. Die Russisch oder Ukrainisch sprechenden Besucher dieser Lesung waren Lachmuskelstrapazierend unterhalten. Mir blieben die Texte leider fast gänzlich verschlossen.

Samstag 16. August

Im Wettbewerb lief *Castig* des italienischen Altmeisters Guido Manuli. Die Gags hat man schon andernorts oft gesehen. Frauen die mit ihren grossen Brüsten agieren kann ich beim besten Willen nicht mehr witzig finden. Obwohl technisch einwandfrei, stellt sich bei diesem Film, dem jegliche Originalität fehlt das lachen nicht ein.

Quest von Tyron Montgomery und Thomas

Stellmach hat seinen Oscar wohlverdient. Jedoch nach mehrmaligem sehen verliert der Film an Haltbarkeit. Die Geschichte ist so flach gestrickt, dass sie tatsächlich nach dem zweiten Mal sehen ihre Tiefe verliert.

Bolexbrothers (Bristol, GB) Chef Richard Hutchinson präsentierte im Wettbewerb Mike Booths *The Saint Inspector*. Hutchinson berichtete auf der nächtlichen Pressekonferenz, das der Film weltweit schon an über 16 Fernsehsender verkauft werden konnte. Ebenso nutzte er die Möglichkeit, dem Publikum spontan das neueste Commercial seiner Firma, das mit einem Budget von £120.000 für Carlsberg Beer hergestellt wurde, vorzustellen. Der 20 Sekunden Spot (Regie: Dave Borthwick/Modell Animation) zeigt einen Schneemann im Kühlschrank der draussen auf einer frischen sommerlichen Wiese ein schönes junges Paar beim Bier trinken beobachtet. Angetan vom zu bewerbenden Produkt treibt es den Schneemann aus seiner frostigen, lebenserhaltenden Umgebung hinaus auf die Wiese, wo er sich dem kühlen Getränk hingibt und.....

Höhepunkt des heutigen Programms war die Retrospektive mit Filmen von Igor Volchek. Volchek, der sich schon auf manchem KROK Festival als begnadeter Pianist und Entertainer hervorgetan hatte, studierte am Minsker staatlichen Konservatorium Piano um danach an den Advanced Courses for Scriptwriters and Animation Film Directors in Moskau. Dort eignete er sich die Kunstfertigkeiten der Animation unter Chitruk, Norstein Nazarow und Khzhanovsky an. Heute arbeitet er als Artistical Director of Belarusfilm Studio (Minsk) und unterrichtet Animation in Minsk.

Capricio (1986) sein persönlichster und wohl autobiographisch zu verstehender Film markierte für mich den Höhepunkt des Festivals überhaupt und unterstreicht seine Meisterschaft als Autor und Regisseur. Ein Animationskünstler, den es internationalen noch zu entdecken gilt.



Richard Hutchinson, Gerben Schermer, Pedro Serrazina, Chris Shepherd. Photo © oTTo Alder.

KROK bietet noch weitere Spezialprogramme die ich jedoch nicht sehen werden kann. Darunter sind Retrospektiven von Monique Renault, Natalya Orlowa, Natalya Chernyshova, Fedor Chitruk, Vyacheslav Kotionochkin und Eugen Sivokon. Weiter Programme sind: eine Retrospektive des Ukrainischen Animationsfilms, ein Programm zum Thema 'Cinema about, Cinema'; 'Eros and Anima'; 'Computeranimation from SIGGRAPH' etc. Also insgesamt ein vielfältiges Festivalprogramm.

Sonntag 17. August

Wir treffen in Sevastopol ein. Mit einer Fähre erreichen wir das nahegelegene Khersones, wo direkt am Ufer des Schwarzen Meers die griechischen Ruinen zu besichtigen sind. Diese Tour durch die Ruinen gipfelt in einem erfrischenden Bad im Meer.

Heute lädt Paul Bush die an seiner Arbeitsweise Interessierten in sein improvisiertes Studio, das er in seiner Kajüte eingerichtet hat ein. Das Interesse ist gross, möglicher-

weise auch deshalb, da bis jetzt seine scratch technic in Russland, der Ukraine und Weissrussland kaum anzutreffen ist.

Nach dem Wettbewerb gibt es im Cafe eine Präsentation des Projects 'Moscow Animation Project'. Aus Anlass des 850 jährigen Jubiläums der Stadt Moskau, stellte die Stadtverwaltung für dieses Projekt 2 Millionen US\$ zur Verfügung. Unter der Leitung von Michael Aldashin (Creative Director) sollen bis Ende des Jahres ca. 40 kurze Animationsfilme entstehen, die dann als Kompilation in Kinos und im Fernsehen zur Aufführung kommen werden. In das Projekt sind neben Aldashin auch Jouri Norstein, Alexander Tatarsky, Andrei Khrzhanovsky, um nur einige zu nennen, involviert. Darüber hinaus waren auch nicht-russische Künstler eingeladen am Projekt teilzunehmen.



Paul Bush. Photo © oTTo Alder.

Nathalya Loukhynik stellte daran anschliessend das KROK-Kinder Workshop Projekt vor. Schon im Juni wurde mit zwanzig Kindern ein kurzer Animationsfilm (direct Animation) angefertigt. Dieser Film wurde nun im Rahmen vom KROK Festival von den anwesenden Profis ergänzt und erweitert. Das Ergebnis soll dann am Ende des Festivals dem Publikum vorgeführt werden.

Nach der Pressekonferenz bewegte man sich wieder in die Bar. Sinnigerweise wird diese Form der nächtlichen Unterhaltung vom

Festival mit 'Re-Animation Club' bezeichnet.

Montag 18. August.

Meine Zeit auf KROK läuft ab. Das Schiff legt in Artek an. Gleich nach dem Frühstück gibt es ein Boot das uns nach Jalta bringt. Zum ersten mal in meinem Leben besuche ich diese schöne, aber von Touristen (wie ich einer bin) über-rannten Stadt. Anschliessend beteilige ich mich wieder an einem sogenannten Massenschwimmen, das dieses Mal im einladenden Wasser des Schwarzen Meeres stattfindet.

Der letzte Wettbewerbsblock des Festivals entpuppt sich als der stärkste. *Pink Doll* (Valentin Ohlshvang, Russland); *End of the World in Four Seasons* (Paul Driessen, Kanada); *Clocks* (Kerstin Winter, Germany); *Bird in the Window* (Igor Kowaliow, USA) und *Many Happy Returns* (Marjut Rimminen, GB) sind so herausragende Filme, die für die teilweise schwache Selektion der anderen Wettbewerbsprogramme (zu viele Filme in einem Programm und daher viel zu lange Programme) entschädigen. Im gleichen Programm sind neue Commercials der Russen Konstantin Bronzit, Rinant Gazizov und Alexei Karaev zu sehen. Commercials ist für die Russischen Künstler nun schon seit einigen Jahren, ein ökonomisch sehr willkommenes Betätigungsfeld. Viele Animatoren und Regisseure sichern sich damit ihren Lebensunterhalt. Beachtlich ist, die hohe Qualität dieser Auftragsfilme.

Artek ist ein Erholungszentrum für Jugendliche und Kinder. Das Festival organisiert hier einen Workshop mit Kindern und ergänzt das Ferienprogramm der jugendlichen Besucher mit open air screenings (Das

Festivalmotto: Die besten Filme der Welt für die Kinder der Ukraine). Beide Vorstellungen sind voll gestopft mit Zuschauern, die begeistert dem Programm folgen. Die Riesenleinwand des einen Kinos ist direkt am Strand des Schwarzen Meers aufgestellt, rechts und links von schlanken Akazien begrenzt. Schräg darüber steht der freche, volle Mond der die laue Sommernacht mit einem milch-weisen Schleier überzieht.

Auf dem Fussweg entlang dem Strand zurück zum Schiff vernehme ich schon von weitem die Tanzmusik und die Freudenschreie der begeisterten Tänzer. Ohne in dieser Nacht ein Auge zu schliessen, tanze ich bis in den frühen Morgen. Jetzt ist es die aufgehende Sonne dem KROK-Zauber ein jähes Ende setzt. Einen Tag vor der Preisverleihung und eine Woche vor Festival Ende bringt mich ein Bus in morgendlicher Fahrt zum Flughafen nach Simferopol. Im Bus dämmert es mir, dass KROK ein unbeschreibliches Festival, ja sogar ein Wunder ist. Danke KROK!

oTTo Alder war Programm Direktor des Int. Trickfilm Festival Stuttgart, ist Gründungsmitglied des 1995 gegründeten 'Fantoche' Festival (Baden, Schweiz), ist seit 1993 verantwortlich für das Animationsfilm Programm des Int. Leipziger Festivals (Deutschland), Mitglied des Beratungskremiums des Internationalen Animationsfilm Festivals Ottawa wirkte arbeitete als Mitglied von Auswahlkommissionen und Jurys vieler Festivals und arbeitet zur Zeit an einem Dokumentarfilm über den Russischen Animationskünstler Fedor Chitruk

KROK '97: A Long Voyage Down the River Dnjeper

by oTTo Alder

Translated from German by William Moritz



Now for the fourth time, the secretive KROK Festival, which is considered to be the best animation festival of all by the connoisseurs, took place in the Ukraine from August 11-25, 1997.

What is so special about KROK? First of all, one would have to note the fact that the Festival takes place on a ship (named after the Soviet army general Marshall Koshevoy, who was successful against the Germans during World War II) which sets sail from Kiev and cruises down the mighty river Dnieper until it arrives at the Black Sea. Therefore, the Festival is continuously in motion. Not fixed in any one place. A floating festival. It is also floating in the truest sense of the word because its financial, organizational and political state always remains open and uncertain until the very day before the Festival sets sail — even for the talented Director, Irina Kaplytchnaya.

Also special about KROK is the fact that for the two weeks on the ship one finds only professional guests, such as directors, cameramen, animators, journalists, critics, festival organizers, sponsors, etc., who watch the film programs in the ship's cinema theater. This is also a

unique experience, for the animation one sees on the screen acquires a further dimension due to the gentle rocking and swaying of the theater.

Animators are a special breed. One reason for this is the art itself, the mystery of which has yet to be solved. - Fedor Chitruk

Whenever the Festival docks in the harbor of one of the larger cities along the Dnieper, the busy Festival organizers swarm on shore with a good load of animation, which they screen in a jam-packed movie theater for 500 enthusiastic children and parents. At the same time the local press has a chance to interview the filmmakers and organizers. For all of the festival participants who do not have to take part in either of these activities, the festival offers sightseeing trips through the city or visits to museums. Meanwhile back on the ship, industrious hands have set the tables in the restaurant and prepared a meal. And that happens three times a day, for two sittings of ravenous festival participants!

That the Festival is a Ukrainian/Russian joint venture which takes place exclusively on Ukrainian water and land is a further peculiarity. The international cooperation is symbolized by the two Festival presidents: David Cherkasky is Ukrainian and Edward Nazarov is Russian! If all politics were handled in such a fashion, we would have a lot fewer problems in this world. Naturally this bilaterality also demonstrates the thought that animation is an independent art form which knows no borders.

The figurehead for the Festival, Fedor Chitruk, was not able to be present, but he wrote a message which included the phrase: "Animators are a special breed. One reason for this is the art itself, the mystery of which has yet to be solved."

One last peculiarity of the Festival must be mentioned: no other festival that I know of



The KROK ship, "Marshall Koshevoy." Photo © oTTo Alder.

embraces such a wide definition of animation. KROK shows not only a fine selection of artful animation films, but also such a variety of parallel programs (discussions, music, satire, dance, eating, drinking, museums, etc.) that none of the other art forms receive short shrift. KROK is itself an animation!

In order to be a little more concrete, and to offer the reader an insight into daily occurrences at the Festival, I now take the liberty of using my modest, and naturally very subjective, diary notes to give a picture of life on the ship. The following is definitely not what an official news reporter would say about the Festival.

Monday, August 11

By chance I met my friend Paul Bush from London (*Still Life With a Small Cup*, Great Britain, 1996) at the Zurich airport. We arrive on the same plane in Kiev, where Galina and Alexander meet us. After Chris Shepherd (*Broken Jaw*, GB, 1997), Pedro

Serrazina (*The Tale About the Cat and the Moon*, Portugal, 1995), and Stephanie Dinklebach (*The Imperial Message*, Ireland, 1996) arrive a little while later, on a flight direct from London, a festival bus brings us to the Kiev harbor, where the ship "Marshall Koshevoy" is already waiting for us.

Registration and the opening reception takes place on the deck. Here we meet for the first time the more than 300 Festival guests. The weather is mild, and with the darkness approaching, the moon

bathes the whole scenery of the Festival with crystalline light. The opening reception dissolves seamlessly into a merry dance under the open starry sky.

The cinema theater on the boat offered a repeat screening of the opening film program, which had already been shown that afternoon in a Kiev cinema to some 600 viewers. The high point of the program is the new film by Andrei Khrzhanovsky, *Long Voyages*. Tonino Guerra, who for many years was Federico Fellini's scriptwriter, collaborated with Khrzhanovsky on writing it. The film is based on Fellini's sketches. Maestro, the hero of the film, goes to sea in order to reach a magnificent island. Tonino Guerra, who is a guest on the KROK ship, abducts us into the world of Fellini's pictures of women. The film seems as if it were specially made just for the KROK Festival.



OTTO Alder on board.
Photo © Paul Bush.

The sudden vibration of the ship, and the dance floor, signals to us that KROK has set sail, and left Kiev under a clear, starry night. In the bar, in the cafe and on the deck, people are dancing, singing and conversing until the night passes over into a new day.

Tuesday, August 12

A gentle Russian woman's voice summons me from my dreams to remind me that breakfast is being served, and at 10 o'clock the second competition program will screen. The soft garden chairs deployed in the cinema fit in quite well with the gentle rocking of the

ship, and carry us away into *Flat World*, the new film by the British Daniel Greaves, whose 1991 *Manipulation* won an Oscar. The technically innovative and narratively wild film about Matt Phlatt, his cat and his greedy fish, sent the overcrowded and completely overheated theater into peals of laughter. Although the message of the film (television is boring and only promotes idiocy) isn't anything new, the audience gladly let it be repeated through this brilliantly animated, highly enjoyable film.

In contrast, the film *Under the Waxing Moon* by the Belgian Hans Spilliaert, which equates the massive shipment of cattle to slaughter in a rather questionable way to the holocaust, jerked the audience sharply back to reality. To show after that, in the same program, other funny films, like Alexander Tatarsky's *Pilot Brothers*, simply didn't work, and placed an unreasonable demand on everyone.

In the bar, in the cafe and on the deck, people are dancing, singing, conversing until the night passes over into a new day.

The selection for the competition was made by Yuri Norstein, Natalya Loukinykh and Boris Pavlov from Russia, Jiri Kubicek from the Czech Republic, Svetlana Kutsenko and Alexander Shpilyuk from the Ukraine, and Kurine Zereteli from Georgia. From the roughly 380 films submitted, only 120 were shown in the competition.

Approaching clouds, rain and fog drive the Festival guests below the ships decks. There they could listen to Michael Aldashin playing guitar, accompanying Ivan

Maximov's singing. Today there are parties both in the bar and the cafe on the lower decks.

Wednesday, August 13

Despite dancing, singing, laughing and drinking until the wee hours of the morning, the film theater is filled to the last seat for the two competition screenings this morning. *Icarus* (Hungary 1996) by Geza Toth, a three-dimensional sand animation, visualizes mankind's ancient dream about flying. It's a bit arts-and-crafts, but convincing technically. This film would receive a certificate from the International Jury: Raoul Servais (Belgium), Igor Volchek (Byelo-Russia), Natalya Orlowa (Russia), Monique Renault (Netherlands) and Natalya Chernyshova (Ukraine).

The film *E=mc²*, also a sand animation, by Ala Churikova from the Ukraine, tells of the birth of love, the world and self-destruction. Actually, it is the parable of two fish who meet, become involved and end up fighting each other to the death.

But the highpoint of the second program for me was the film *Golosa (Voices)* made in 1995 by two artists from Moscow, Dimitri Rezchikov and Alexander Ratnovsky, in the classic cartoon technique. Both of these directors learned their animation craft in the Moscow Pilot Studio under Alexander Tatarsky. Then in 1994 they created their own studio under the name DEVON. The fact that Russian popular culture is virtually unknown to us must be attributed to our narrow-minded fixation on western culture. *Voices* is a music video for the song of the same name by the popular Russian singer Nastya Poleva. However, this studio's animated music videos, *Acid Wine* and

Beasts, with their clear concept, far surpass technically, formally and aesthetically the often over-financed products from the West.

From the roughly 380 films submitted, only 120 were shown in the competition.

Thursday, August 14

The KROK guests don't seem to know anything about sleep. Once again the Festival danced until deep in the morning. The sky over the Ukraine is once again sunny and clear. KROK is docked in the port of Kherson. After the competition screening, a boat brings the entire festival to an island, where we are served a picnic, and everybody goes swimming. Cooled down from this swim, the filmmakers submit to the daily questioning of journalists and critics. At the same time the younger guests are dancing on deck to hard Techno rhythms. The "older" guests hang out in the bar where Ukrainian music is performed live. The pianist and the woman singing don't let their audience leave before five in the morning. In the cafe at the other end of the ship some play cards, others carry on heavy conversations until late that night. In another corner of the same cafe there is hearty laughter.

The 50 staff members of the ship, from Captain to cook, tend ceaselessly to the well-being of the guests day and night. Everything seems to work perfectly.

Friday, August 15

After breakfast, the festival docks in the harbor of Odessa. Paul Bush is dressed particularly elegantly today. Certainly that is a sign that his film is going to be

screened in competition this morning. Paul isn't on this ship just for pleasure. He uses every free minute to work on his new film. Since he works in a scratch-directly-on-film technique, his studio (a light table, 35mm film stock and scratching tools) fits neatly in his luggage. His new project is titled *The Rime of the Ancient Mariner*, a visualization and interpretation of the poem written in 1820 by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. The film will be 15 minutes long, and should be finished by next year. Paul Bush still has 5,000 images to scratch out by then — no easy task, when one considers that he often works for five hours on one single frame.

Despite beaming sunshine, dark clouds suddenly close in over KROK. One member of the jury, Igor Volchek, has stomach trouble and must be rushed to the hospital. From Moscow comes the sad news that Vadim Kurtchevsky, a brilliant director of many popular Soviet films, died last night. Many of his friends are on board. Sorrow swept over the whole ship, written on the faces of the people.



The KROK International Jury. Left to right: Monique Renault, Raoul Servais, Natalya Orlowa, Igor Volchek, Natalya Chernyshova. Photo © oTTo Alder.

From the deck one has a perfect view of the long staircase down to Odessa harbor, which Sergei M. Eisenstein made world famous through his film *Battleship Potemkin*. None of the Festival guests miss a chance to walk up those steps to the city of Odessa. It

seems as if the lovely, picturesque Mediterranean-like city of Odessa blows the mourning away from the faces of the Festival guests.

After dinner, the competition screens the German feature *Katherina and Witt* (100 min., 1997) by Mariola Brillovska and Charles Kissing. With brutal images essentially reduced to symbols, the film tells an adventure, love story about two Interpol agents assigned to solve the largest art theft of all time. This film, too heavy with dialogue and text, tries to level harsh criticism against the commercialization of art, art dealers, and poses many legitimate questions about the "true" meaning of art in today's society. But I'm afraid that *Katherina and Witt* itself may be an object of the shady art market and its attendant subsidies which it criticizes.

The KROK guests don't seem to know anything about sleep.

The cultural highpoint of the fringe events must be the recital in the cinema theater by a popular Odessa satirist. The Russian and Ukrainian speaking guests enjoyed themselves immensely, laughing until their cheeks hurt. Unfortunately for me the evidently witty text of the songs remained a complete mystery.

Saturday, August 16

Today's competition screening includes *Casting* by the old Italian master Guido Manuli. The gags have all been seen before in other places. Hard as I may try, I just can't find women's large breasts wagging funny anymore. Although technically unobjectionable, this film, which

lacks any originality, failed to arouse laughter.

Quest by Tyron Montgomery and Thomas Stellmach really deserved to win the Oscar. Nevertheless, the film doesn't hold up after several viewings. The story is set up so flat that actually after the second time it loses its punch.

Bristol, England's Bolexbrothers head Richard Hutchinson presented in competition Mike Booth's *The Saint Inspector*. Hutchinson confided to the nightly press conference that he had already been able to sell the film to more than 16 television broadcasts worldwide. Likewise, he used the opportunity to screen spontaneously for the public the latest commercial (with a budget of £120,000) from his firm for Carlsberg Beer. The 20-second spot, directed by Dave Borthwick using 3D model animation, shows a Snowman in a refrigerator who sees a handsome young couple drinking beer in a fresh summer meadow. Lured by the advertised product, the Snowman leaves his frosty life-supporting environment to go out in the meadow where he devotes himself to the cool drink and

The highlight of today's program was the retrospective of the films of Igor Volchek. Volchek, who revealed himself to be a talented pianist and entertainer at some of the earlier KROK Festivals, studied piano at the Minsk State Conservatory and then participated in the Advanced Courses for scriptwriters and animation film directors in Moscow. It was there that he acquired an adeptness in animation under the tutelage of Chitruk, Norstein, Nazarov and Khzhanovsky. Today, he is the artistic director of Belarus Film

Studio in Minsk where he teaches animation. *Capriccio* (1986), his most personal and most autobiographical film, represented the climax of the festival for me and it underlined his expertise as an author and director. He is an animation artist who has yet to be discovered internationally.



Paul Bush demonstrating his scratch-on-film technique in a makeshift studio in his cabin.
Photo © oTTo Alder.

KROK also offers more special programs which I will not be able to attend. Amongst these there are retrospectives of the work of Monique Renault, Natalya Orlova Chemysheva, Fedor Chitruk, Vyacheslav Kotionochkin and Eugen Sivokon. Other programs include a retrospective of Ukrainian animation, a program on the theme of "Cinema about Cinema," "Eros and Anima," "Computer Animation from SIGGRAPH," and more. In other words, a diverse festival program is offered.

Sunday, August 17

We arrive at Sebastopol. We reach nearby Khersones by ferry, where directly on the banks of the Black Sea one can visit Greek ruins. This tour through the ruins is crowned by a refreshing swim in the sea.

Today Paul Bush has invited those who are interested in his production methods to visit his improvised studio which he has installed in his cabin. The general

interest in his work is great, possibly because until now his scratch technique has hardly been seen in Russia, the Ukraine and Byelorussia.



Late night on the deck. Left to right: Richard Hutchinson (U.K.), Gerben Schermer (Holland), Pedro Serrazina (Portugal), Chris Shepherd (U.K.). Photo © oTTo Alder.

After the competition there is a presentation of the "Moscow Animation Project" in the cafe. For the 850th Centennial of the city of Moscow, the city council has put up U.S. \$2 million for this project. Under the direction of creative director Michael Aldashin, 40 short films will be produced before the end of the year and will then be compiled and shown in cinemas and on television. Besides Aldashin, Yuri Norstein and Alexander Tatarsky, to name but a few, are also involved in the project. Moreover, non-Russian artists will also be invited to participate.

Afterwards, Nathalya Loukhynik presented the KROK childrens' workshop. In June, a short animation film had been completed by twenty children. Within the framework of the KROK festival, the professionals present expanded and added to this film. The result will be shown to the public at the end of the festival.

After the press conference, we returned to the bar. This form of nightly entertainment was aptly termed "the Re-animation Club" by the festival.

Monday, August 18

My time at KROK is coming to an end. The ship docks at Artek. Directly after breakfast we take a boat to Yalta. For the first time in my life I am visiting this beautiful town that is overrun by tourists, of which I am one. Afterwards I participate in a so-called mass swim which takes place in the inviting waters of the Black Sea.

The final screening of the competition turns out to be the most impressive. *Pink Doll* (Valentin Ohlsvang, Russia), *End of the World in Four Seasons* (Paul Driessen, Canada), *Clocks* (Kerstin Winter, Germany), *Bird in the Window* (Igor Kovalyov, USA) and *Many Happy Returns* (Marjut Rimminen, GB) are such outstanding films that they recompense us for the partially weak selection in the other categories. There were just too many films in each program and therefore, the programs were overly lengthy. In this same program we get to see the newest commercials by the Russians Konstantin Bronzit, Rinant Gazizov and Alexei Karaev. For the last several years, the commercial area has become a very welcome field of activity for Russian artists. Many animators and directors are able to earn a good living this way. The high quality of these commissioned films is notable.

Artek is a recreational center for young people and children. The festival organizes a workshop for children and supplements the holiday program for the young visitors by providing open air screenings. The motto of the festival is, "The best films of the world for the children of the Ukraine." Both showings in Artek are crammed full of spectators who follow the program with great enthusiasm. The gigantic

screen of one cinema is erected directly on the beach of the Black Sea, lined on both sides by acacias. Diagonally above, the moon hangs cheekily, filling the balmy summer night with its milky haze.

In the bus I realize that KROK is a sheer indescribable festival, a marvel.

On the footpath along the beach leading back to the ship, I can faintly hear the dance music and the joyous shouts of the enthusiastic dancers in the distance. Without getting a moment of sleep, I dance until the early hours of the morning. Now the rising sun sadly ends the KROK magic. Just a day before the final prize awards are announced and a week before the end of the festival, a morning bus takes me to the airport at Simferopol. In the bus I realize that KROK is a sheer indescribable festival, a marvel. Thank you, KROK!

See the complete list of award-winning films in this issue.

oTTo Alder is the former program director of the Stuttgart International Animation Film Festival. In 1995 he was involved with the founding of the Fantoche Festival in Baden, Switzerland. Since 1993 he has been responsible for the animation program at the Leipzig Festival in Germany. He has also served on the juries and selection committees of numerous festivals, and is working on a documentary film about the Russian animation artist Fedor Chitruk.

Anima Mundi '97: Brazil's Time to Shine

Latin America's only animation festival, Anima Mundi, was held in Rio de Janeiro from August 8-17. This surprisingly vibrant and international festival was not only a success, but another step toward building Brazil's growing animation community.

The international, non-competitive festival offers audience members the opportunity to pick their favorite films. This year's three



awards went to:

- Best Film: *Dada* by Piet Kroon (Holland).
- Best Children's Film: *The Rescue Team* - Episode "The Glue" by Jánis Cimermanij (Letonia).
- Best Computer Animation: *Sticky Business* by Ed Taylor (United Kingdom).

Our review of Anima Mundi offers two different looks at the fes-

tival. Edmundo Barrieros reports on the festival and its impact on Brazilian animation in *Anima Mundi In Brief* which is available in both Portuguese and English. Lea Zagury and Aida Queiros' *On the Winning Film: Dada* offers a detailed political analysis of why they feel *Dada* was the public's favorite film. This article includes a Quicktime movie of *Dada* by Piet Kroon in the HTML version.

Bonus HTML Features

Every online (HTML) issue of *Animation World Magazine* contains additional features not found in the download or print Acrobat version, such as Quicktime movies, links to Animation World Network sites, extended articles and special sections. Don't miss the following highlights that are showcased exclusively in this month's *Animation World Magazine* HTML version:

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.7/2.7pages/2.7cover.html>

- **Springfield, Nevada**

AWM visited Henderson, Nevada, to see first-hand the home of *The Simpsons*. The HTML version features four Quicktime movies, including for a full tour of the house and coverage of an entire day of Fox festivities.

- **Happy Birthday, Chuck Jones!**

Our coverage of the animation legend's 85th birthday party includes a Quicktime movie of an exclusive interview with Chuck Jones.

- **Cartoon Network's Dive-In Theater: A Floating Cinema**

Exclusively on the AWN web site: an opportunity to win one of 60 Dive-In Theater cartoon character rafts. Hurry! Contest ends October 31.

- **On the Winning Film: *Dada***

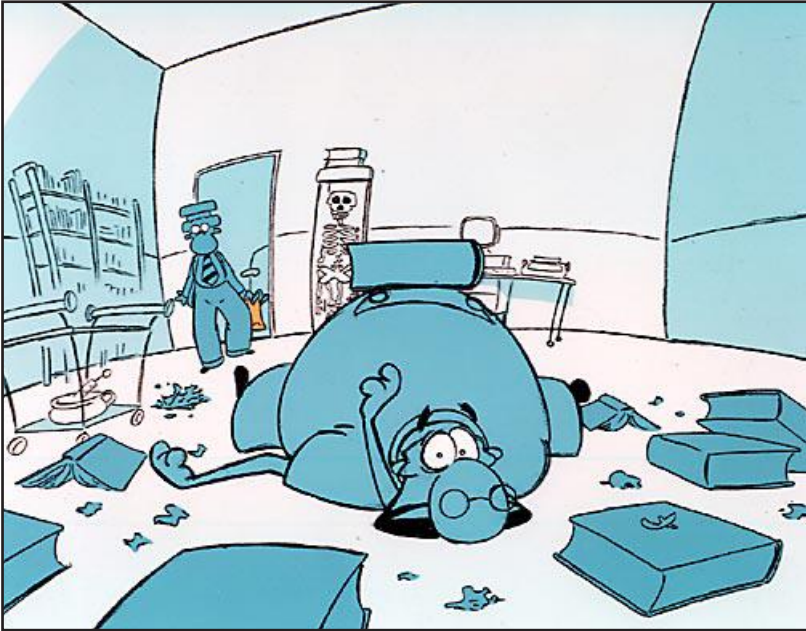
The report from Anima Mundi includes a Quicktime movie of the award-winning film *Dada* by Piet Kroon.

- **Rue Rosé: A Twist on Rose-Colored Glasses**

Includes a Quicktime movie of the film *Rue Rosé* by Volker Schlecht.

On the Winning Film: *Dada*

by Lea Zagury and Aida Queiros



Dada by Piet Kroon. © Picture Start/Cilia van Dijk Film Productions.

During the fifth Anima Mundi Festival, the audience awarded for the third consecutive year, a prize for their favorite animated film. The Public Award is very important and meaningful because it reflects the charm and spontaneity of Brazilian taste, preference and opinion. After five years of presenting a variety of great works, we are now able to observe how the Anima Mundi audiences taste is becoming more refined.

The public was captivated by *Dada* because it told a story by using very intelligent humor.

Among the many great films that were screened, *Dada*, by Piet Kroon from Holland, was the win-

ner of Anima Mundi '98. This film's popularity certainly illustrates the Brazilian audiences' identity because it reflects the social, political and economical context that Brazil has been living with for so many years.

This film's popularity certainly illustrates the Brazilian audience's identity ...

One of the strongest Brazilian cultural characteristics is an irreverence toward the imposed and pre-established political resolutions determined by the rulers of our society. Good humor and mockery are constantly used in many art forms to ridicule and criticize what is considered dishonest, inappropriate and immoral in these decisions. This characteristic became very significant during the years Brazil was ruled by a Dictatorship when any other form of opposition and dissi-

dence was strongly repressed with violence.

The public was captivated by *Dada* because it told a story by using very intelligent humor. The audience enjoyed the film, laughing frequently, and recognizing themselves as the protagonists.

Lea Zagury is one of the four directors of the Anima Mundi Festival. She is an independent filmmaker of animated shorts and studied Experimental Animation at Cal Arts. She has since worked at PDI in film effects and in development for Turner Feature Animation. She is now developing an animated television series with Troon in L.A..

Aida Queiros is also a director of Anima Mundi. She is a founder and president of Campo Quatro Desenhos Animados, an animation studio in Rio Di Janiero that produces commercials. She also directs her own animated shorts and teaches animation courses in several institutions.

See also: Piet Kroon's article on the making of his latest film, T.R.A.N.S.I.T., in the February 1997 issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

Anima Mundi Em Breve

by Edmundo Barreiros

Pelo quinto ano consecutivo, Anima Mundi foi o principal evento cultural do Rio de Janeiro por dez dias do mês de agosto. Desta vez, mais de 22 mil pessoas assistiram a 126 filmes e dezenas de vídeos, além de participarem de oficinas e palestras. O único festival do gênero em toda a América Latina novamente trouxe para os cariocas o melhor da produção autoral internacional, assegurando uma sintonia com o mundo que começa a render seus primeiros frutos. Se antes de Anima Mundi os animadores brasileiros tinham que sair do Brasil ou dedicar-se à publicidade para conseguir trabalhar - hoje estão ocupando cargos importantes nos principais estúdios do planeta —, já é possível vislumbrar um futuro mais iluminado. Dois curtas estiveram na mostra competitiva de cinema e foi possível realizar uma sessão de vídeo especial com onze novas produções "made in Brazil" (algumas assinadas por jovens que tiveram seu primeiro contato com o mundo da animação em Anima Mundi).

O sucesso do evento, que já levou mais de 120 mil pessoas ao Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, um belíssimo prédio do século XIX em

pleno coração do Rio de Janeiro, deve-se, principalmente, ao seu relacionamento íntimo com o público. Todos os que frequentam o festival

sentou uma inovação na premiação. Duas novas categorias foram criadas para premiar os favoritos o público. Além do melhor filme, a platéia escolheu, também, a melhor produção infantil e a melhor em computação gráfica. A categoria mais tradicional foi vencida por *Dada*, título holandês dirigido por Piet Kroon. A Letônia ficou com o prêmio infantil pela série *The Rescue Team*, animação em massinha de

Jánis Cimermanij. O melhor em computação gráfica foi o britânico *Sticky Business*, de Ed Taylor.



Cesar Coelho, Valeria Colela, Lea Zagury, Aida Queiroz, Marcos

tem a oportunidade de experimentar a produção de seu próprio filme de animação nos estúdios abertos permanentes. O preço das sessões é simbólico (menos de US\$ 3,00 para filmes e US\$ para vídeo) e os prêmios são definidos por júri popular.

Este ano Anima Mundi apre-



Caroline Leaf, David Sproxton. Photo: Lula Rodrigues. © Anima Mundi.



Jeff Lynch, 'Story Board Workshop.' Photo: Lula Rodrigues. © Anima Mundi.

Anima Mundi, porém, não se limita a trazer para os cariocas as melhores novidades do cinema de animação. O intercâmbio com alguns dos mais importantes profissionais do mundo tem sido marca registrada do evento. Este ano, os destaques ficaram por conta da presença da americana Caroline Leaf, com uma retrospectiva de sua obra; e do inglês David Sproxtton, que veio para mostrar o trabalho de sua produtora, a Aardman. Os dois foram as principais estrelas da mostra *Papo Animado*, na qual os criadores exibiram seus filmes e debateram com o público. Os dois convidados estrangeiros estiveram ao lado do brasileiro Luiz Briquet, talentoso animador responsável por algumas das melhores campanhas publicitárias do país, tendo recebido prêmios respeitados como festival de Cannes ou o Clio.

Ainda mais importante do que apresentar e discutir o melhor da produção internacional, Anima Mundi se propõe a estim-

ular o interesse de jovens brasileiros pela animação. Por isso, além dos estúdios abertos, sempre são organizados "workshops" nos quais os brasileiros aprendem alguns elementos fundamentais desta arte. O destaque de 1997 foi o americano Jeffrey Lynch, que apresentou uma oficina de "storyboard." O brasileiro Carlos Saldanha, diretor de ani-



Edmundo Barreiros.

mação da produtora Blue Sky e professor da School of Visual Arts, em Nova York, veio ensinar alguns macetes da computação gráfica.

Pela quinta vez, Anima Mundi foi um grande sucesso. Dessa vez, com uma vantagem em relação aos anos anteriores. A abertura das salas de projeção do Espaço Cultural dos Correios uma

semana antes do habitual permitiu que mais gente pudesse assistir aos filmes, o que, felizmente, não deixou os cinemas vazios. As poltronas em Anima Mundi estão sempre cheias de gente que mal pode aguardar outro ano para a próxima edição de um evento que já está se tornando uma tradição no calendário cultural do Rio de Janeiro.

Edmundo Barreiros, 31, é jornalista. Como repórter, cobriu todas as edições de Anima Mundi. Apaixonado por animação, é, também, roteirista e crítico de quadrinhos. Nascido no Rio de Janeiro, mora nesta cidade e tem um filho que o acompanha aos festivais de animação há 4 anos.

Anima Mundi In Brief

by Edmundo Barreiros

Translated from Portuguese by Alejandro Gedeon.

For the fifth consecutive year, Anima Mundi stands again as the most important cultural event in Rio De Janeiro. Spanning ten days in August, more than 22,000 people enjoyed 126 films and dozens of videos, and participated in various workshops, talks, and other events.

Anima Mundi's Impact

This unique animation festival, the only one of its kind in Latin America, brings to the Cariocas (as the residents of Rio refer to themselves) the best in world-wide animation. The festival helps to create a synchrony between the rest of the world and the Brazilian industry that is just beginning to bear its first fruits. Before Anima Mundi was born, Brazilian animators had to go abroad to find work, or they took jobs in advertising. Today many of them are creating their own independent studios, or they hold important posts in top animation studios around the world. Its now possible to see a brighter future for Brazilian animation. This year, two Brazilian short films were in competition. Also, a video showcase with eleven new "Made In Brazil" productions, was presented. Some of these works were created



Festival directors (left to right): Cesar Coelho, Valeria Colela, Lea Zagury, Aida Queiroz, Marcos Magalhaes. Photo by Lula Rodrigues. © Anima Mundi.

by young animators that were introduced to the art of animation through Anima Mundi's previous festivals.

For the fifth time Anima Mundi was a big success.

Over the past five years, this event has brought over 120,000 people to the Bank of Brazil's Cultural Center, a magnificent building from the 19th Century located in the heart of Rio. The event's success, however, is mainly due to the festival's close and intimate relationship with the

public. Every individual who visits the festival, has the opportunity to develop his or her own animation in the various studios, or animation stands, that are permanently open to the public. The admission for these sessions is nominal (less than \$3 for films and \$1 for video) and the prizes are awarded by "popular jury," in other words, the audience.

In addition to the prize for best film, this year Anima Mundi introduced two new prize categories that are awarded by the audience: the Best in Children's Animation and the Best in Computer Graphics. The award for best film was given to *Dada*, a Dutch film directed by Piet Kroon. Letonia won the Children's prize with *The Rescue Team*, a claymation series directed by filmmaker



Caroline Leaf, David Sproxtton. Photo: Lula Rodrigues. © Anima Mundi.



Jeff Lynch (right) teaching at the Story Board Workshop. Photo by Lula Rodrigues. © Anima Mundi.

Jánis Cimermanij. The Best in Computer Graphics was *Sticky Business* by British director Ed Taylor.

The festival helps to create a synchrony between the rest of the world and the Brazilian industry that is just beginning to bear its first fruits.

International Guests

Anima Mundi not only brings to the Cariocas the best in new animation, but also the very special guests who constitute the trademark of a great festival. This year, the audience was honored by the presence of American filmmaker Caroline Leaf who showcased her complete work. Also present was English producer and filmmaker David Sproxton who showed the works of Aardman Animations. Both were the main attractions of the event *Papo Animado*, or Animated Chat, in which the guests show their work and have an open dialogue with the audience.

Alongside the international guests was Brazilian animator Luiz Briquet, who is responsible for some of Brazil's best advertising campaigns. He showed his work which includes pieces that have won prizes at the Cannes Festival and the Clio Awards.

Beyond presenting the best in international production, Anima



Edmundo Barreiros.

Mundi's purpose is to stimulate Brazilian youths' interest in animation. For this reason, in addition to the open public studios, Anima Mundi also organizes animation workshops where Brazilians can learn some of the fundamental principles of the art. A highlight of the 1997 festival was the workshop on Story Boarding, directed by American animator and artist Jeffrey Lynch. Brazilian Carlos Saldanha, an animation director for Blue Sky Studios and a professor at the School of Visual Arts in New York, came to share some tips and tricks on computer graphics.

The event's success, however, is mainly due to the Festival's close and intimate relationship with the public.

For the fifth time Anima Mundi was a big success. In an improvement over past years, the screening rooms in the Post Office buildings' Cultural Center opened one week earlier than the rest of the schedule, allowing more people to be able to see the films. Even with this added capacity, the seating was full of people who will hardly be able to wait for next year's installment of this event; an event which is already becoming a tradition in the cultural calendar of Rio de Janeiro.

Edmundo Barreiros is a 31 year-old journalist. As a reporter he has covered all of the Anima Mundi editions. He is an animation lover and also a writer and cartoon critic. Born in Rio de Janeiro, he lives there with his son who has been accompanying him to the animation festivals for the last four years.

SAFO '97: The First Time Around

by Joan Ashworth

The September 1997 SAFO was a new festival on the world circuit with the emphasis particularly on students, their work and their future. It was designed to bring them together with educators and practitioners in the industry so that there might be a cross-fertilization of ideas and exchange of needs, wants and practices.

The festival was invaluable to those lucky enough to attend.

Good Solid, Down-to-Earth Advice

The students seemed to relish the five days. Here they were being taken seriously by awe-inspiring names like Pixar, MTV, PDI and Cartoon Network. Their work was being seen outside their college, projected even, to an audience beyond immediate friends and family. Instant comments from viewers who had not struggled through the production agonies were priceless. Students from other colleges,



prospective employers, heroes and film crews were asking questions and, perhaps most importantly, offering advice and fresh-eye comments, often from a slightly different cultural background. The festival was invaluable to those lucky enough to attend.

It doesn't matter how many times a student's college tutor gives them advice on presentation and pitching, but when J. J. Sedelmaier tells them to keep their reel to three minutes, their portfolio tight and their resume clear, they know he's right and they know that they should save their twenty minute

unedited rushes for another viewing - even if they are a visual poem! For students to be able to walk around and see the faces behind those powerful animation stalwarts, to realize that the companies aren't ogres or impregnable, that they have needs too, that there will always be room for genuine talent... Well, these are experiences that no classroom or school can

really give. From an educator's point of view, it was just a little reassuring that some of the advice handed out about living in the real, professional world was being backed up and taken in. Hopefully, the first-hand experiences will be passed around the studios and bars back at college to spread the benefits beyond the (relatively) few who could attend.

Now the proliferation of courses around the world is creating a feast of talented, young filmmakers, many of them genuine voices.

Mainstream Mania

At times, though, it seemed as if the mainstream was perhaps a little too dominant. Maybe it was because of the inevitable prevalence of the North American feature industry, but to this (European) animator it was a shame that more experimental or innovative work was not more evident; that work from the Canadian film schools did not exist alongside the many commercial, happy cartoons. Students are often told that their graduation



We Lived in Grass by Andreas Hykade took home the Grand Prize.



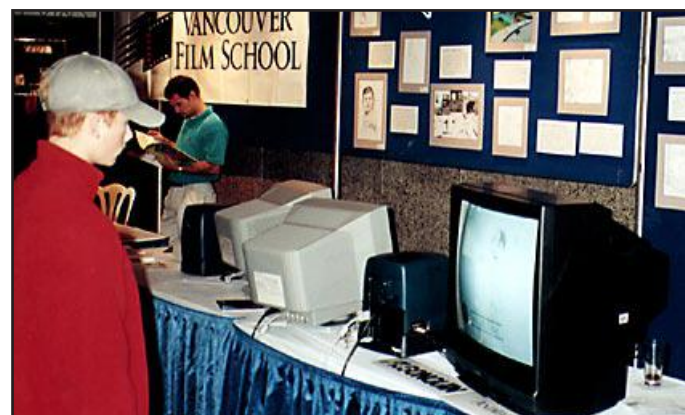
03a The Arts Center, home to both SAFO and the biannual Ottawa International Animation Festival. Photo © Animation World Network.



David How of Sheridan College presenting a seminar. Photo © Animation World Network.

film is their calling card, and they have accepted that. However, they also shouldn't forget that the film they make at college is one of the very few times that they will be able to express their art so freely and shout so individually. Prospective employers are often artists too, and they can see job-worthy quality in more artistically challenging work. There is no need to dumb-down to get a job in a mass-market industry. I was surprised and disappointed by the screening room reactions to some of the more thoughtful works: shouting and slow clapping a non-narrative film highlights the lack of acceptance, even in these circles, of animation as a more expressive and experimental art form.

As long as the students remember that they are more than just cartoon technicians, the future ... looks bright indeed.



Many schools exhibited at SAFO, offering festival-goers an opportunity to look at the different educational programs available in animation. Photo © Animation World Network.

The Future

Overall the festival certainly has a place and is welcome. It shows again just what a high animation is on at the moment. Ten years ago the industry was so much more limited and incestuous. Now the proliferation of courses around the world is creating a feast of talented, young filmmakers, many of them genuine voices. Inevitably technology has had its part to play, opening up animation to smaller colleges and more students.



Teletoon, Canada's new all-animation channel, was among the corporate exhibitors in SAFO's AniMarket. Jodi Hazzan, Communications Coordinator for the network, greeted visitors. Photo © Animation World Network.

Companies and colleges showed off their finest computer animation wares to students who devoured all on offer. The Pixar stand was an especially popular focus with students made aware by the success of *Toy Story* that there is life for inventive computer-based storytelling beyond flying logos, spaceships and digital tunnels. Computers have quickly become a massive boon to animation, helping to make it more attractive as a career and pulling in a wider variety of young talent from science as well as art backgrounds.

Now events like Ottawa are helping to integrate the

industry and the educators, bringing graduates into the fold. As long as the students remember that they are more than just cartoon technicians, the future for the producers, educators, students and festival organizers looks bright indeed.

Joan Ashworth has run the animation department of London's post-graduate Royal College of Art for the last three years, winning the prize for the most innovative school at both Annecy and Ottawa. She has a long and distinguished client list from around the world for her commercial work through her studios, 3 Peach and Seed Fold.

The following prizes were awarded at SAFO:

Grand Prize: *We Lived in Grass* by Andreas Hykade (Germany)

Best Unfinished Film: *Love Story* by Pedram Goshtusbpour, Jason Rennie (Canada)

Runner Up Best Unfinished Film: *The Tenor* by Thor Freudenthal (Germany)

Best Character Animation: *Cappuccino* by Ulo Pikkov (Estonia)

Best Computer Animation: *Riante Contré* by Francois Vogel (France)

Runner Up Best Computer Animation: *Adrenaline* by Lionel Richerand (France)

Best Experimental Film: *Fruhling* by Silke Parzich (Germany)

Best Background Design: *Season's Greetings* by Michael Dougherty (USA)

Best Canadian Film: *Mr. Lucky* by David Soren (Canada)

Special Jury Prizes:

Experimental: *HISAO* by Mashiro Sugano (USA)

Stop motion: *Shadows in the Margerine* by Pekka Korhonen, Leena Yaaskelainen, Kaisa Penttila (Finland)

Original Concept: *Arnold Has A Thought* by Peter McDonald (Australia) and *The Ticker Talks* by Stephen Harding-Hill (U.K.)

Fantoche: Switzerland's Experiment - A Critical Review

By: Thomas Basgier



Left to right: Thomas Basgier, oTTo Alder and Ron Diamond. © 1997 Animation World Network.

There is a difference between the theory of a festival and the practice. Fantoche, which took place for the second time from September 9-14 in a small Swiss town called Baden not far from Zurich, is a good example of that. The intention was to be different from other festivals, to focus on the innovations in the field of animation, reduce the competitions attraction and present programs with unusual subject matter in order to establish new connections...

Innovation...A Definition

But, in fact, "innovation" means all and nothing. To realize such a goal seems to be rather easy for the organizers of Fantoche: you only have to avoid established names and incorporate mostly student films. That's the simple reason why, for example, Phil Mulloy's new film *The Chain* was not in competition. He is already too famous which is a strange way to program a festival.

There is a difference between the theory of a festival and the practice but that doesn't mean that Fantoche has no qualities of merit.

As at every festival, the competition programs were, of course, the most attractive screenings to attend. The concept of some of the other programs were quite old fashioned ("Best of the World") or not very clear in presenting termini which are already established in film science. For example, during Fantoche we received a completely new impression about everything that we knew as "psychedelic film."

The Good and The Bad

It is true. There is a difference between the theory of a festival and the practice but that doesn't mean that Fantoche has no qualities of merit. The atmosphere was quite nice and intimate and the competition presented, despite all of the high demands about non-defined innovation, many convincing and original films. In fact, it was in general a much better competition than that of the last Annecy Festival. The retrospectives were also of a very high standard. Jerzy Kucia, Piotr Dumala, Oksana Cherkassowa and Vera Neubauer were all honored. The festival was also a good starting point to discuss the connection between animation and the Internet and the possibilities it presents for filmmakers as both a medium of



Many Happy Returns by Marjut Rimminen. © Channel Four Television.

art and for distribution, financing, etc.

In fact, it was in general a much better competition than that of the last Annecy Festival.

On the other hand, the organizers should take more care about the projection, which is really the heart of a festival. The equation is quite simple: bad projection = bad festival. The organizers should also think about moving the festival to Zurich. There, they can expect a larger and more interested audience. Baden is really a contempla-



Marjut Rimminen (left) and Clare Kitson celebrate their win. © 1997 Animation World Network.



Fantoche organizer Frank Braun (left) and Swiss animator Robi Engler. © 1997 Animation World Network.

tive place but after 10:00 PM it is as lively as a cemetery.

Scandal...

At the end of the Festival we also had a contemplative, little scandal. The jury, consisting of Nag Ansorge, Oksana Cherkassowa and Jayne Pilling, couldn't come to an agreement about the prize for Best First Film. The final result in this case was, indeed, quite unsatisfactory. Two films had been discussed in the last round: Walentin Olschwang's *Pink Doll* and *Grandmother* by Andrei Zolotuchin. Russia against Russia. The prize went to *Grandmother* which is definitely the weaker film. *Pink Doll* is a great animated nightmare about a little girl who projects her aggressions against her mother's lover on her new, pink doll. The doll starts to fulfill all of her fantasies - until the bitter end. The question is, do we see only fantasies or do the fantasies become reality? A dark subject in



Polish animators Jerzy Kucia (left) and Piotr Dumala. © 1997 Animation World Network. Don't miss our interview with these two filmmakers in an upcoming issue of *Animation World Magazine*.

dark colors. Oksana Cherkassowa was so angry about this (wrong) decision that she didn't attend the awards ceremony.

In two years we will attend Fantoche again, hoping to see an improved festival with less theory and more practice, and to discover yet another masterpiece.

However, no doubt about it, the best film of the competition won the first prize. *Many Happy Returns* by Marjut Rimminen, a Channel Four production, is a combination of puppet and live-action elements. The subject is rather delicate: child abuse (remember Marjut Rimminen's former film *The Stain*). There is not only emotional perplexity, but also a lot of strong images. The film is wonderful and very suggestively composed. It is like a kick in the kidneys. It was worth the visit to Fantoche to watch this film. In two years we will attend Fantoche again, hoping to see an improved festival with less theory and more practice, and to discover yet another masterpiece. One masterpiece is even more than you can expect...

Fantoche 1997 Awards

The international jury of Fantoche was comprised of Jayne Pilling (U.K.), Oksana Cherkassowa (Russia) and Nag Ansorge (Switzerland). Out of 49 films in competition, they selected the following prize-winners:

- First Prize (5,000 Swiss francs): *Many Happy Returns* by Marjut Rimminen (United Kingdom). Jury comments: "This film is a moving narrative with an intelligent use of

the evocative potential of modern cinema."

- Second Prize (3,000 Swiss francs): *How Wings Are Attached to the Backs of Angels* by Craig Welch (Canada). Jury comments: "The highly rational construction of this film creates a surrealist atmosphere which is very impressive. With this the film demonstrates that human nature cannot be manipulated by technical wizardry."
- Best First Film (5,000 Swiss francs): *Grandmother* by Andrei Zolotuchin (Russia). Jury comments: "For its graphic qualities and its simple and sincere narrative."
- Honorable Mentions: *Un Jour* by Marie Paccou (France), and *Lost Momentum* by Scott Sona Snibbe (U.S.). Jury comments: Two films which each match visual inventiveness to original ideas."
- Public's Choice Prize (3,000 Swiss francs): *The Grande Migration* by Youri Tscherenkov (France).

Thomas Basgier is the European representative for Animation World Network. He has a strong background in animation as well as communications and multimedia. For more than ten years, he has organized programs for international festivals, and published numerous articles on the subject of animation. From 1987 to 1992, he organized and programmed one of the premiere European animation festivals, the International Animation Film Festival of Stuttgart. He also specializes in the conception and realization of multimedia and Internet projects. He is currently working on such projects with one of the biggest communication agencies in southwest Germany.

Rue Rosé: A Twist on Rose-Colored Glasses

by Don Perro

In 1980 I reviewed Raging Bull in an art school homework assignment. I didn't like the film...all that blood on the camera lens was too much for this sensitive first year student. A week later my paper came back with more red on it than there was on De Niro's paunchy face: the instructor loved the film, disagreed with me and wanted to let me know everything there was to love about it. Seventeen years later, I'm ready to try this again...



A child sees the world through rose-colored glasses in *Rue Rosé*. © Volker Schlecht.

Rue Rosé is a short film produced at the Burg Giebichenstein, Hochschule fuer Kunst und Design in Halle, a town just outside of Leipzig, Germany. Volker Schlecht, the filmmaker, has created a thoughtful work of just over five minutes.

The walks of the people we see are as varied as the characters; studies of personality through gait.

The Story

The Rue Rosé is revealed to be a moving treadmill upon which various adults walk. We see these people reflected through the rose colored glasses, literally, of a child who has a special music box that must be put away as he, or she, is encouraged to be swept along with the rest. The walks of the people we see are as varied as the characters; studies of personality through gait. We hear the footsteps, ticking like a metronome, as birds provide accompaniment in the background. The ticking of the steps soon becomes overwhelmed by the tolling of a bell as panic begins to set in. People quicken their paces. A little old lady, walking with the help

of a cane, is the first to meet her demise...

Techniques

The theme of walks and walk cycles is common in student films, often, I suspect, because re-using drawings is as tempting to students as it is to studio accountants. But *Rue Rosé* goes beyond that: Volker Schlecht's characters are realistic and well-drawn, and are reminiscent of Bill Plympton's complex drawing style. The character animation concentrates on the walks, which are effective satirical sketches of people on the move. The varied and interesting camera angles show that Schlecht is far more concerned with telling his story using strong design than with time-saving devices.

The varied and interesting camera angles show that Schlecht is far more concerned with telling his story using strong design than with time-saving devices.

Another time-saving device enjoyed by students, and again,

accountants, is the use of levels. However, the levels here are used quite creatively to assist in telling the story. The animation is drawn on semi-transparent paper which allows us to see two levels at once. Unlike cel animation, the levels in *Rue Rosé* are easy to differentiate. The lower drawings have a pale color and soft edges because of the top sheet of paper. The top drawings are bright and clear. Schlecht uses this visible difference to focus the viewer's attention. Characters move to the top level becoming sharp, when the animator wants us to look at that figure, much like a director pulling focus in a live-action film.



The artist, Volker Schlecht, used walking as a recurring visual theme in *Rue Rosé*. © Volker Schlecht.

Rue Rosé is a witty, and rather scary, look at the hurried pace of life through a child's reflective glasses. The film has already won awards in the festival circuit and if you get a chance to see it, step off *your* treadmill and take a seat.

Don Perro is an animator and designer currently coordinating the Commercial Animation Program at Capilano College in North Vancouver, Canada.

Mmmmm...A Virtual Travel Guide: *Virtual Springfield*

by Joe Toledo

If you remember Truckzilla, Apu's Secret Garden, or The Sandwich, then it's time for you to move to Virtual Springfield.

Fox Interactive's *Virtual Springfield* doesn't just put you into *The Simpsons* cartoon, it puts you smack-dab in the middle of their world. You start in the heart of Town Square under the shadow of the great Jebediah Springfield. There you meet Troy McClure (you might remember him from such driver's ed films as *Alice's Adventures Through the Windshield Glass* and *The Decapitation of Larry Leadfoot*) who tells you a little bit about the "pea-sized town with lima bean-sized dreams." After that, you are on your own to explore Springfield, USA.

All in all, if you are a die-hard *Simpsons* fanatic, *Virtual Springfield* is a must.

Out on the Town

Using the mouse, you can walk through the streets of Springfield, admiring the sights and meeting all your favorite characters from *The Simpsons*. Featuring tons of original animation and all the original voices from the show, you truly feel like you are there.

Using the map to get around, you can visit 17 different



© Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.

spots in Springfield. Stop by Moe's for a beer with Barney, visit the Old Simpson Place for a visit with Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa, and Grandpa, or just wander the streets of Springfield looking over all the sites you've come to know from the television show. The 3D rendered version of Springfield looks fantastic as you move real time from location to location.

Fun for the Whole Family

If you aren't the *Simpsons* freak I am, there are other things to do in town. Scattered around at different locations are small arcade style games to play. My two favorites are found at the Noiseland Arcade near the Kwik-E-Mart.

In "Larry the Looter," you are

Larry, running through town, hurling trash cans through windows and collecting points for everything you can get your hands on. But watch out for the store owner. He's got a 12-gauge and a bad attitude.

Of course, Larry doesn't hold a candle to "Smite of the Bumblebee." Starring my personal favorite *Simpsons* character, the Bumblebee Man, "Smite of the Bumblebee" is a recreation of the worst day of his life. His wife has left him, he's been pelted by an arsenal of oranges, and it's your job to build on his misery by knocking him unconscious with tomatoes in the face. Okay, so it probably isn't the nicest game in the world, but,

hey, it is supposed to be the worst day in the Bumblebee Man's life, right?

While the games provide a brief diversion from wandering around, they won't hold your attention for long. The gameplay is pretty limited to a minute or two.

While the software has game-like elements, it is lacking the depth of a game.

If games aren't your cup of tea, *Virtual Springfield* features a complete set of Springfield Community Collector's Cards. Each digital card features a different citizen of Springfield, USA, and the 74 cards are scattered all over town.



Homer explores Apu's Kwik-E-Mart in *Virtual Springfield*. © Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.



Inside the home of America's favorite cartoon family. © Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.



Virtual Springfield offers *Simpsons* fans a chance to explore the uncharted depths of Bart's room. © Twentieth Century Fox Home Entertainment.

The cards aren't only fun to collect, but if you aren't familiar with all the characters in town, it's a great way to learn their names and faces.

D'oh!

No town is perfect, though, and *Virtual Springfield* is no exception. While the software has game-like elements, it is lacking the depth of a true game. The individual objectives to get into each location are very easy to achieve.

Once you've been around town a few times, traveling in real time between locations starts to get

to visit, once you've been to them several times, the novelty starts to wear off. The 17 locations become familiar, and you feel as though you have seen everything.

***Virtual Springfield* would have benefited from having a better gaming element incorporated into it...**

Virtual Springfield would have benefited from having a better gaming element incorporated into it, slowly revealing more locations

a bit long. If we could quickly jump from spot to spot without having to walk the streets every time, a game play would be enhanced as there wouldn't be as much down time between locations. Plus, even though there are 17 great locations

around town and introducing the characters one by one to extend playing time and add an extra layer of depth.

A Final Thought

All in all, if you are a die-hard *Simpsons* fanatic, *Virtual Springfield* is a must. You'll enjoy every frame of new animation and finding props from all of your favorite episodes. For the occasional *Simpsons* viewer or younger fans looking for an interactive *Simpsons* experience, *Virtual Springfield* may not be what they are looking for. I recommend they try Fox Interactive's title *The Simpson's Cartoon Studio* where they can direct the Simpsons in a custom cartoon. The action is a little more fast-paced, and it doesn't require as much knowledge of the show to understand the humor.

The Simpsons: Virtual Springfield is available now on CD-ROM for Windows 95 and Power Macintosh at a retail price of \$29.98.

Joe Toledo is executive producer at North Communications, an Internet kiosk developer based in Marina del Rey, California.

Animation At The Museum Of The Moving Image

by Yvette Burrows

Since opening in 1988, the Museum of the Moving Image (MOMI) has aimed to be a 'living' museum. One of the first museums in the United Kingdom to employ a full company of actors to entertain and inform guests, MOMI has, through many interactive exhibits, allowed visitors to delve behind the scenes of the magical world of the moving image.

With professional animators on hand, visitors are encouraged to try out their own animation skills...

The Animation Exhibit

The animation exhibit, located in the heart of the museum, is central to the museum's ethos. A changing exhibition of animation cels leads the way to the main exhibit area. Currently, work from the internationally famous Hanna-Barbera series *Scooby Doo* by Iwao Takamoto is on display. We are delighted that Iwao himself visited the Museum on September 21 to give a talk to museum visitors.

The animation area also houses a unique, glass-fronted animation booth where visitors can actually observe an animator at work.

The main animation exhibit area is designed in the shape of Reynaud's praxinoscope, which, like many of the Victorian toys featured

at the Museum, used animation techniques before cinema was invented. With professional animators on hand, visitors are encouraged to try out their own animation skills using an early toy in visual illusion, the zoetrope.

A whole menagerie of cartoon animals, including Tom & Jerry, Donald Duck, Goofy, Pluto and Henry's Cat, rampage around the walls. These characters are all from cel animations - drawn or painted on celluloid then filmed in sequence. However, other techniques are also explored: the cut-outs of Terry Gilliam; and the silhouettes of Lotte Reiniger; Caroline Leaf's sand animation; the puppets of Eastern Europeans like Jan Svankmajer; the line drawings of Winsor McCay and the stop motion models recently made so popular in Britain by Aardman Animations and the Brothers Quay.

Artists in Residence

The animation area also houses a unique, glass-fronted animation booth where visitors can actually observe an animator at work.

Four animators are chosen every year to take part in the Animator in Residence Scheme, sponsored by Channel 4 Television. Each animator



The animation exhibit in the Museum of the Moving Image, London. © MOMI.

spends three months in the Museum's animation booth, animating 1-2 minutes from the storyboard of their own animated film. This work is then submitted to the animation department at Channel 4 Television where the commissioning editor for animation, Clare



In addition to animation artwork, the MOMI animation exhibit features a glass-fronted animation booth. Here, animator-in-residence Brian Wood works on his film *School Disco*. © MOMI.

Kitson, will decide whether or not to give the go ahead for a final complete production. So far all those who have completed a residency (24 in all), have gone on to be commissioned. Nineteen of the animators have completed their films and five are currently in production. Once finished, these films are broadcast on Channel 4 Television. Several have gone on to win prestigious prizes at international film festivals. Most recently Ruth Lingford's film *Death and the Mother* earned a Special Mention for Graphic Style at the 1997 Annecy International Festival of Animation.

Other Programs

The Museum continues to support the animation industry by acting as a base to the British Animation Training Scheme (BATS). BATS, an industry-led initiative, offers a vocational training scheme, "Assisting in Animation." Trainees attend the course one day per week for 30 weeks. For the rest of the week, the trainees are employed as juniors in the animation industry. BATS aims to extend the range of available vocational animation training. With this in mind, the first one-week BATS Summer School, "An Introduction to the Animation Industry," was offered last year to young people considering a career in traditional 2D animation. This year, two such courses were offered and we hope to continue the program next year.

In addition, the Museum's Education Department regularly runs animation events for all age ranges and for those with special needs. These half-day workshops offer students an introduction to the processes involved in devising their own animated film.



Anthony Hodgson, creator of the acclaimed student film *Hilary*, worked on the puppet animation film *Combination Skin* during his 1995 residency at MOMI. © MOMI.

Evening events in the Museum Cinema also regularly focus on animation. For example, in August we featured *The Len Lye Story* which looks at the life and work of the maverick animator and



Sam Moore using a multi-plane for her oil-on-glass film *Glasgow Kiss*, during her residency July-September 1995. © MOMI.

artist. Our current Special Exhibition runs until late November and features original art work by Gerald Scarfe from the latest Disney feature *Hercules*.

In addition, the Museum's Education department regularly runs animation events for all age ranges and for those with special needs.

Animation is a varied and wonderful art form which continues to enjoy huge public interest, in part because of the accessibility of the medium to the amateur film

maker. The Museum of the Moving Image will continue to promote and display the work of animators past and present and is committed to supporting vocational training and new animation through BATS and the Channel 4/Museum of the Moving Image Animator in Residence Scheme. MOMI has something to offer everyone. From a pleasant day out with the children to teach them the basic principles of animation, to jump starting an independent animation career, there is a MOMI program for you.

Contacts

If you would like to know more about the animation schemes at the Museum, please contact Yvette Burrows on 0171-815-1376.

For information about events and screenings please call the box office on 0171-928-3232.

For Museum information please call 0171-401-2636 (24 hr recorded information).

The Education Department can be contacted on 0171-815-1339/8 and preferential rates are offered to groups through the Group Bookings Office on 0171-815-1350.

The BFI web site can be found at www.bfi.org.uk

Yvette Burrows is Animation Coordinator at the Museum of the Moving Image and as such is responsible for the Animator-in-Residence Scheme and the British Animation Training Scheme.



NEWS

by Wendy Jackson

Business

NOB Invests In Medialab.

NOB, a European broadcast facility center based in Hilversum, Holland, is joining forces with European media group, Canal +. NOB will purchase a sizable stake in Canal +s Paris-based real-time animation production subsidiary, Medialab, in exchange for a 50% stake in the company. The relationship will provide Medialab with increased funds for research and development (R&D), while integrating the use of their motion capture technology into production services offered by NOB. This partnership is similar to the one between Medialab and Burbank-based media group, 4MC. The two joined forces in January 1997 to form Medialab Studio LA, a 50/50 joint company servicing the film and television industries. While NOB's investment will primarily affect Medialab's European studio, the capital investment in R&D will ultimately benefit the L.A. facility with the implementation of new technologies. "NOB's backing underscores the growing recognition of the potential for performance animation as a powerful production tool," said Medialab's president and CEO Gerard Mital.

Veteran Lacewood Leader Forms Amberwood.

Former Lacewood Productions leader, Sheldon Wiseman, has announced the formation of Amberwood Entertainment Corporation, a new company under his direction which

will specialize in development, production and distribution of television productions for third party producers. Based in Ottawa, Canada, Amberwood will primarily focus on animated productions, starting with *Zeroman* a co-production with Los Angeles-based Cloud 9 Media (see Television News in this issue). "Amberwood has embarked on an ambitious program of development," said Wiseman, "And we are also looking to the Canadian creative community to come forward with further concepts and proposals for both animated and live-action projects." Wiseman was formerly chairman and president of Lacewood Productions, producer of animated series such as *Flash Gordon*, *Savage Dragon*, and *Katie and Orbie*. Lacewood was recently acquired by Toronto-based Paragon Entertainment, following the failed partnership between the two companies (AF 8/05/97).

Activision's Investment Activity.

Activision, the ever-expanding interactive game developer and publisher, has acquired an equity stake in yet another young game developer. Redline Games has signed a long-term agreement with the company, naming Activision as their exclusive publisher. The first three Redline titles will be released by Activision in 1998. Activision also recently acquired Raven Software, and has development deals with five other game developers: id Software, Ritual Entertainment, Parsoft Interactive, Titanic Entertainment, Eutechnyx Ltd. and

Kalisto Technologies.

Fox Completes IFE Purchase.

Fox Kids Worldwide completed its \$1.9 billion purchase of International Family Entertainment (IFE) in early September. The merger brings IFE's cable network, The Family Channel, under the control of Fox Kids, which currently programs only on network television through Fox Kids Network (FKN). It has not yet been determined exactly what the future of programming on the Fox Family Channel will look like, but FOX's acquisition of IFE is certainly their next calculated move into the cable market. Fox has been gearing up for expanded children's programming since they were cut loose from parent company News Corp. to form a joint company and launch a cable network with Saban Entertainment (AF 10/07/96 and AF 1/21/97). While Fox integrates IFE operations and holdings into the company, much restructuring is taking place. It has been reported that out of IFE's 800 employees, several hundred based in Virginia will be laid off in the consolidation, starting in October. Larry Jacobsen has just been named to the board of directors of Fox Kids Worldwide, in his recent executive promotion to president of Fox Television Network. In July, Margaret Loesch, who has been heading up operations for Fox Kids Worldwide, had her position changed from president to vice chairman (AF 7/22/97), a role in which she will be working on the integration of FKN programming onto the Fox Family Channel.

However, speculation continues around her future role at the company.

Planet Comics Opts For Deferred Sentence.

The two-year court battle involving the Oklahoma City comic book store, Planet Comics has come to a sudden and unexpected end. The case revolves around charges against Planet Comics for selling and displaying "obscene material" (adult comics). The Comic Book Legal Defense Fund (CBLDF), a non-profit organization dedicated to defending First Amendment rights in the comic industry, had taken on the Planet Comics case under the policy that the defendants, Michael Kennedy and John Hunter (owners of Planet Comics), would not plead guilty in exchange for a reduced penalty. But on September 5, just days before the case was to go to trial, Kennedy and Hunter's defense attorneys entered a guilty plea to the charges, without consulting the CBLDF. In exchange, Kennedy and Hunter were each given a \$1500 fine and three-year deferred prison sentence, which means they do not have to serve jail time if they are not convicted of any further criminal activity in the next three years. While the sentence reduction is a relief for the defendants, the CBLDF sees it as a setback in their mission. CBLDF executive director Susan Alston said their reduced sentences are "a small comfort indeed when considered in the larger and more important context of the erosion of rights guaranteed under the First Amendment that their guilty plea represents."

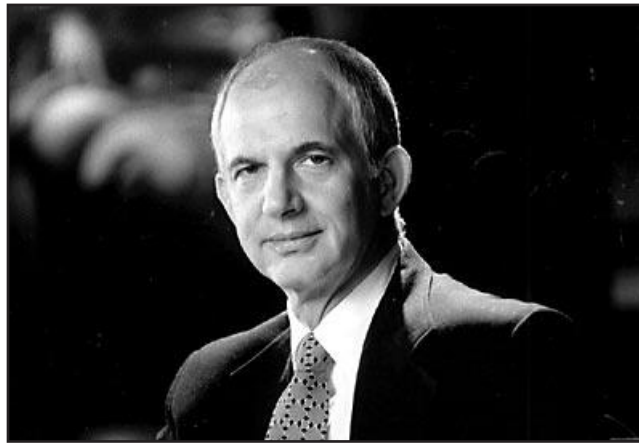
For background information on the case, see Susan Alston's arti-

cle "Censorship In Comics: Is This the United States?" in the July 1997 Comics issue of Animation World Magazine.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.4/awn2.4pages/2.4alstonlegal.htm>

What do you think? Discuss the topic in the AWN Discussion Forum. <http://www.awn.com/HyperNews/get/general1.html>

Blue Sky, VIFX Merge. Very Imaginative Pictures, parent company of Los Angeles-based visual effects studio, VIFX, has acquired a majority interest in New York-based CG character animation facility, Blue Sky Studios. The end result of this



David Brown, President and CEO of Blue Sky | VIFX.

investment/merger is a fully integrated, bicoastal company called Blue Sky | VIFX, which will specialize in visual effects and animation for a variety of media. Maintaining their respective titles held at Blue Sky and VIFX, David Brown will be CEO while Richard Hollander will be President of the new company. The staff of the two companies combined totals at roughly 250 people, and is expected to increase with new hires approximately 20 to 50% in the next year. There will be some shuffling of talent between studios as a careful integration gets started over the next few months. Technology, such as Blue Sky's pro-

prietary rendering software CGI Studio, will be shared between the two facilities. The main focus of this "vertically integrated" company is to service "whatever comes up that needs high-quality images," said Richard Hollander, stating that the company will offer everything from 3D animation and digital compositing, to a model shop and motion control systems. Hollander also stressed that while VIFX's parent company, Fox, is a frequent and major client, the scope of Blue Sky | VIFX work will not be limited to effects for Fox feature films.

It was just over a year ago that VIFX was purchased by News Corps Fox Filmed Entertainment. While the financial arrangements of the deal were not disclosed, the company's CFO, Gene Straub, does not deny Fox's interest in the merger, but stresses that this is a long-term, strategic move which is not based on a particular project. In Los Angeles, Blue Sky | VIFX is currently working on tests for Fox Feature Animation's second feature, *Planet Ice*, as well as visual effects for a number of fea-

tures, including *Titanic*, *Mouse Hunt*, *Blackwood*, *Alien: Resurrection* and *T-Rex*, an IMAX venue project. The New York studio is currently doing tests for several feature and commercial projects. Blue Sky | VIFX is currently looking for a "communication solution" to manage real-time, high-speed transfer of digital imagery and data between the two locations. Blue Sky currently uses Sprints Drums package for this purpose. The company will have its' headquarters in VIFX's Los Angeles studio, which is scheduled to move into a new, 90,000 square foot facility in early 1998.

For background information

on Blue Sky Studios, see the feature article spotlighting the company in the May 1997 issue of Animation World Magazine.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.2/articles/ohmerblue2.2.html>

H-B Staffers Moving To WB.

According to announcements made at the studio, the remaining staff of Hanna-Barbera Cartoons will be relocating from their home of 35 years, the Hanna-Barbera building on Cahuenga Boulevard in Hollywood, to join the offices of Warner Bros. Classics and Television Animation in Sherman Oaks. Designed by architect Arthur Froehlich, Hanna-Barbera Studios' futuristic *Jetsons*-style building has become a landmark to the animation industry since it was erected in 1962, five years after William Hanna and Joe Barbera founded the company to produce television animation. News of the pending move, scheduled to take place by December, comes amidst industry rumors that the Hanna-Barbera building and lot has been sold to Universal. Universal, who declined comment at the time of this report, does have its own animation production unit, Universal Cartoon Studios, based in the Universal City lot, about a mile away from Hanna-Barbera. It is uncertain at this time what will become of the building. Hanna-Barbera is currently in production on *Cow and Chicken*, *Dexter's Laboratory*, *Johnny Bravo* and a series of shorts for Cartoon Network.

Karzen Execs Form A Q. "Q" is the name of a new production company in Los Angeles, which has been launched to specialize in design, animation, motion graphics, and live-action for television commercials. The company has

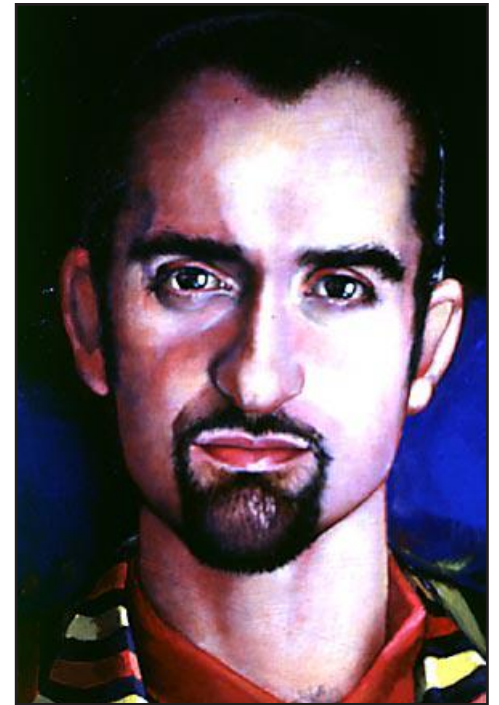
been founded by Marc Karzen, Ed Hynes, C.B. Harding and Chris Roe, who are principals of Karzen, an L.A. broadcast design firm. Q will be represented by Yvette Lubinsky on the West Coast, Mary McClenahan in the Midwest, and Andy Arkin/BLAH! Blah? (Blah...) on the East Coast.

People

Hollywood Shuffle. Computer animation director **Miles Flanagan** has signed with **Duck Soup Productions** for exclusive commercial representation. Flanagan joined the director roster at Klasky Csupo Commercials in May, following four years of representation by Acme Filmworks. Duck Soup is currently bidding Flanagan as director on two projects, but no jobs are confirmed at this time. . .

Dominic Schreiber has joined the staff of **K Media Relations**, a Los Angeles-based publicity firm representing clients such as Medialab and Viewpoint Data Labs. He was formerly a staff writer at *Animation Magazine*. . . . Composer **Danny Elfman** has signed an exclusive, multi-picture agreement with **Walt Disney Motion Pictures Group** to direct, write and produce motion pictures on a first-look basis. In addition to making his debut as a filmmaker, Elfman will also compose film scores for two upcoming Disney releases, including the live-action feature, *Flubber*. Danny Elfman is known for his innovative film scores, such as those for *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, and *Mars Attacks!* with Tim Burton. . . . **Peter Moss** has joined **Children's Television Workshop** (CTW) as executive producer. He will be co-executive producer on CTW's new multimedia pre-school series, *Dragon Tales*. Moss was previously creative head of TV Children's Programs for the

Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC), where he oversaw local efforts on *Sesame Park*, the Canadian co-production of *Sesame Street*. . . . **Digital Artworks**, a Eugene, Oregon-based digital animation studio, has named **Thomas L. Durant** president and CEO. He was formerly with SpectraPhysics and Optical Coating Laboratory. . . . **Brian Graden**, the former Foxlab



Miles Flanagan is being represented for commercial direction by Duck Soup.

executive vice president who recently executive produced the *South Park* animated series for Comedy Central, has joined the staff of **MTV** as executive vice president of television programming. In this newly-created role, he will be responsible for supervising development and production of all MTV series. . . .

Walt Disney Animation Canada has named **Joan Fischer** general manager. Fischer previously handled business affairs at **TV Ontario**. . . . German animator **Raimund Krumme** has taken on a full-time teaching position at **Cal Arts** Experimental Animation program. Under department chair Jules Engel, Krumme will

be teaching both graduate and undergraduate level courses. **Maureen Selwood** is now associate director of the Experimental Animation department, a position previously occupied by Christine Panushka, who has moved over to USC's Animation Program. . . . Los



I Married A Strange Person, the new animated feature from Bill Plympton. © 1996 Bill Plympton.

Angeles-based effects studio, **Vision Crew Unlimited**, has hired **Robert M. Polla** (formerly of Novocom) as controller, and **Gloria Fernandez** (formerly of Boss Film Studios) as purchasing coordinator. . . . **Loconte Goldman Design**, a broadcast design firm, has named **Glenn Chalek** executive producer. He was formerly president/executive producer for Big Brother Productions.

Film Roman Names New CEO.

After some executive head-hunting, Film Roman has found someone to take on the role of President and CEO. David Pritchard has been named to the position by Chairman Phil Roman, who has been heading up operations since he founded the company in 1984. This appointment will free some time for Phil Roman, who has expressed a desire to spend more time in his creative role at the company. "We

believe David Pritchard is the executive we've been looking for," said Roman. "[He has] the corporate experience necessary to help return the company to profitability." Pritchard was previously CEO and partner of Pritchard/Ecclesine, a live-action and animated TV and film production company. It is anticipated that several of the projects currently at Pritchard/Ecclesine will be transferred to Film Roman for continued development. Film Roman series currently in production include *The Simpsons*, *King of the Hill*, and *Blues Brothers*.

Films

Miyazaki's Latest Reigns Over Japan Box Office.

Princess Mononoke (Japanese title *Mononoke Hime*), the latest animated feature film from acclaimed director Hayao Miyazaki, recently broke box office records as the highest-grossing Japanese film ever in Japan. Since the film was released in July, it has enjoyed sold-out shows at theaters throughout Japan, bringing in approximately U.S. \$108 million at the box office in Japan, more than five times the amount of money that producers, Studio Ghibli, spent to make the film. It is expected that that number will increase to U.S. \$137 million by the end of October. Released by Tokuma Shoten, *Princess Mononoke* is the first feature film in over five years from Hayao Miyazaki, whose previous hits include *Nausicaa of the Valley of the Wind* and *My Neighbor Totoro*. These figures are impressive considering the price of a movie ticket in Japan these days is the equivalent of U.S. \$18.00! The popularity of the film in Japan could be attributed to Miyazaki's recent announcement that this is the last

animated feature film that he will direct. Buena Vista Home Entertainment has obtained rights to distribute eight of Miyazaki's films on home video (AF 7/01/97), including *Princess Mononoke*, but is not expected to distribute them until next year at the earliest.

Calico Makes Animals Talk For Saban Feature.

Chatsworth, California-based Calico Entertainment is working on more than 350 visual effects shots (about 30 minutes of film) for Saban Entertainment's live-action feature film, *Rusty: the Great Rescue*. The film features a live-action cast of animals talking through animated mouths, much like the talking pig pioneered by Rhythm & Hues for the feature film, *Babe*. Calico is using several software packages to create the illusion, including: Elastic Reality for frame-by-frame warping of the live-action footage; Lightwave 3D for modeling of the replacement mouths; and After Effects and Digital Fusion for compositing. Calico's president and CEO Tom Burton, who is supervising producer and effects director on the project, commented, "We're using a combination of 2D and 3D techniques that draws on our traditional animation background." *Rusty: The Great Rescue* is slated for a direct to home video release in February 1998.

I Married A Strange Person

Premiere. Bill Plympton's new animated feature film *I Married a Strange Person*, has its premiere in September at the Toronto International Film Festival in Canada. The premiere launches the worldwide festival tour of the film. The next stop on the festival circuit is the Hamburg Film Festival in Germany, followed by The Sitges Fantasy Film Festival in Barcelona,

Spain and the San Sebastian Horror Film Festival, also in Spain. For information about the film or filmmaker, visit the Plymptoons web site on Animation World Network. <http://www.awn.com/plympton/index.html>

Terraglyph's Feature In The Works.

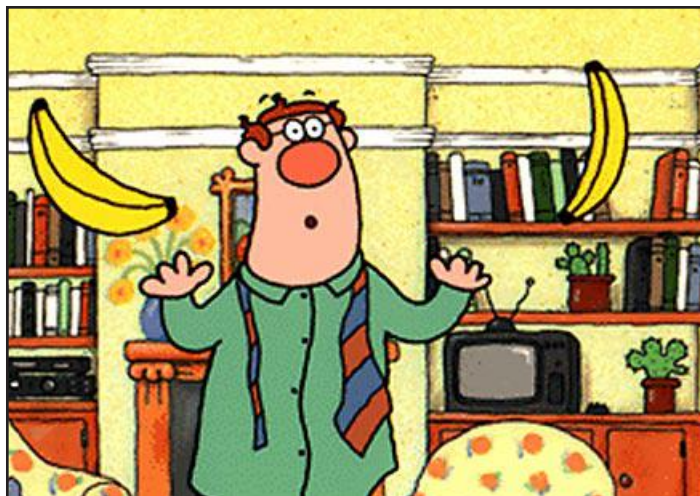
Dublin, Ireland-based TerraGlyph Productions are in production on an animated feature film titled *Carnivale*. Slated for an early 1999 theatrical release, the 70 minute film will utilize traditional and digital 2D animation techniques. Talent working on the film includes Russel Boland as producer, Paul Bolger as animation director and Australian Deane Taylor (art director on *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *All Dogs Go To Heaven II*) as director. The 40-person staff in Dublin is doing design, storyboarding, layout, background, animation, clean-up and effects work while a 15-person assist crew in Madrid, Spain is handling additional on animation, clean-up and special effects. Budgeted at U.S. \$10 million, the film is being financed by shareholders and TerraGlyph Group's backer, Flynn Enterprises (Don Flynn is also a founding shareholder of Blockbuster Video). TerraGlyph Dublin is the was founded in 1995 as a division of Chicago-based TerraGlyph Interactive, which produces animation for multimedia titles.

Television

Cloud 9 Enters TV Production With Zeroman.

Marina Del Rey, California-based children's entertainment company, Cloud 9 Interactive, is moving into television production with the formation of a new division, Cloud 9 Media. Jeff Segal, former president of

MCA/Universal Family Entertainment and Universal Cartoon Studios, joined Cloud 9 in April to head the startup of the media division. *Zeroman*, a property Segal created with fellow Cloud 9 staffer and Universal alum Michael Torres, is now being developed and is entering pre-production as a co-



Production has begun on *The Bob and Margaret Show*, an animated series about mid-life crisis, based on Alison Snowden and David Fine's Oscar-winning animated short, *Bob's Birthday*.

© Snowden Fine Productions.

production with Canadian Amberwood Productions, a new company founded by Sheldon Wiseman of Lacewood Productions. The Cloud 9/Amberwood partnership emerged out of Cloud 9's "need to have an association with a company with film production capabilities," said Segal. *Zeroman* will be predominately 2D animation with some CGI effects, and will star actor/comedian Leslie Nielsen, who, coincidentally (or not), had planned to lend funds to Lacewood Productions before it was acquired by Paragon Entertainment this year. This is not the first animation project for Canadian-bred Nielsen. He is the narrator on Lacewood's animated series, *Katie and Orbie*, which now airs on the Disney Channel (U.S.), and just completed filming the live-action feature version of the classic UPA cartoon *Mr.*

Magoo for Walt Disney Pictures. In the Cloud 9/Amberwood series, Nielsen voices the character of Zeroman, a comedic spoof on superhero action/adventure characters. Neither a distributor or pre-sold broadcasters for *Zeroman* could be confirmed at the time of this report, but negotiations are

underway. Cloud 9 is also in development on several other (mostly live-action) television projects, including another animated series called *I Can Be Three*, a co-venture with Epoch Entertainments Joe Pearson (*Captain Simian and the Space Monkeys*) and writer John Loy (*The Land Before Time* sequels). Cloud 9

Medias plans also include development and licensing of original animated characters from their interactive *Learning Adventure* CD-ROM titles.

Locomotion Enters Europe Via Spain.

The Locomotion Channel, an all-animation cable channel run by Hearst Entertainment and the Cisneros Group, launched in Spain in September. Distributed through Via Digital's DTII platform as part of its basic 35-channel package, Locomotion plans to customize its programming for the Spanish market, by using local voice talent and animators. "Launching in Spain is a significant step for the growth of the channel and an initial step in our plans for European distribution," said Locomotion general manager Gustavo Basalo. Locomotion is cur-

rently seen 24 hours a day in 11 Latin American countries via the satellite service DirecTV, and is also part of Imagen Satelital's channel repertoire in Argentina. On November 1, the channel will become accessible to more viewers in Latin America through their first cable launch.

Snowden & Fine's Bob & Margaret is in Production.

Nelvana Limited and Global Television Network have confirmed that *Bob and Margaret*, an animated series based on Alison Snowden and David Fine's Oscar-winning short, *Bob's Birthday*, is in production. The British duo optioned the property early this year (AF 2/21/97), and have been in development while lining up production partners. *Bob and Margaret* is a Canadian/United Kingdom co-production between Nelvana Limited and Channel 4 Television, in association with Global Television Network. The budget for the series is Canadian \$7.3 million, with Nelvana financing roughly 75% as the majority financier. The series will air on Channel 4, Global Television Network, and has just been sold to Comedy Central. Aimed at an adult, prime-time audience, the 13 episode series is being written and executive produced by Alison Snowden and David Fine, who will work out of their London-based studio.

For information about the creators of this show, visit Alison Snowden

and David Fine's web site on Animation World Network. <http://www.awn.com/snowden-fine/index.html>

Space Ghost On Mars.

Apparently, NASA's Mars Pathfinder team members are real cartoon fans. They have just named a few more space rocks after Cartoon Network/Hanna-Barbera characters. Inspired after an interview with Mars Pathfinder project leader Matthew Golombek on the TV series, *Space Ghost Coast to Coast*, the team named four Mars rocks, Space



Van-Pires, the animated series. © Abrams Gentile Entertainment.

Ghost, Zorak, Moltar, and Brak. This strange sort of cartoon character fame is shared with Yogi Bear, Boo Boo, Scooby Doo, Casper, Calvin & Hobbes and other stars who have also had Mars rocks named after them. Images of the rocks can be seen online at <http://mpfwww.jpl.nasa.gov>

Modern Cartoons Hit Network TV. There are a few new

programs on U.S. television this Fall featuring real-time, or, motion-capture animation. More than one of them features characters created by Venice, California-based real time animation studio, Modern Cartoons. *Cyber Lucy*, not to be confused with MTV's *Cyber Cindy*, is a 3D animated character created by Modern Cartoons, who makes her debut performance on CBS this Saturday morning (9/13), as co-host on the live-action children's series *Wheel 2000a* spin-off of the popular game show *Wheel of Fortune*. NBC aired *Steve/Oedekerk.com*, a mixed

media comedy special featuring real-time animation segments created by the studio. Modern Cartoons is now in development on several projects, including an all-real-time animation political satire series for HBO, starring Harry Shearer, the voice of Mr. Burns and many other characters on *The Simpsons*. Despite real-time animated characters such as Cartoon Network's *Moxy*, and Canal +s *Clio*, it was NBC's real-time animated interstitials host, *Johnny Chimes*, created by

Medialab Studio L.A., that first brought real time animation to network television.

Stay tuned for the Motion Capture and Stop Motion Animation issue of Animation World Magazine, coming up in February 1998.

Van-Pires Premiere. *Van-Pires*, a new series combining live-action with 3D computer animation, will

premiere on U.S. network television this Saturday (9/13) as part of Summit Medias syndication block. Produced by Abrams-Gentile Entertainment, New York (creators of *Sky Dancers*) and MSH Entertainment, San Francisco, *Van-Pires* depicts a group of teenagers who protect the world from evil anthropomorphized vans (Van-Pires) by turning into robo-cars themselves (Motor-Vaters), upon yelling, "Mission Ignition!" A full line of show-related merchandise will, of course, soon be available in toy stores. Syndicator Summit Media is a division of 4 Kids Entertainment, an independent licensing company. Check your local listings for show times.

E n e r g e e ' s Distribution Energy.

Australia-based Energee Entertainment has sold 26 episodes of *Crocadoo*, their animated series, to Cartoon Network Asia-Pacific. This is the first time that Cartoon Network has purchased an Australian-made series for broadcast in Asia, India, Australia and New Zealand. Already sold in over 30 territories worldwide, *Crocadoo* is being distributed in the U.S. and Europe by All American Fremantle. Energee's new animated Christmas special, *Scrooge Koala's Christmas*, has recently been sold to The Seven Network in Australia, and will be shopped to other markets at MIPCOM in late September.

For more information on Energee Entertainment, see the September 1996 issue of Animation World Magazine, which featured an article profiling the studio.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.6/articles/paterson1.6.html>

Zen On Chrono Quest. Santa Monica-based Zen Entertainment, a sister company of Sei-Young Animation in Korea, is working on a 26 episode series titled *Chrono Quest*. The show combines 3D and 2D animation, with the majority of the animation being produced with Animo software, to which Zen recently purchased 41 licenses from Cambridge Animation Systems. *Chrono Quest* is Zen's first original animated series, set for international distribution in fall 1998. Pre-sale distribution agreements have been

prices. Now that the *Blues Brothers* series is moving forward for a planned fall 98 premiere of 13 episodes on UPN, Film Roman should experience a recoup in finances. *Blues Brothers*, a property which Film Roman initially optioned the rights to, marks a step forward in the company's plan to own the shows that they produce. As the producers of *The Simpsons*, Film Roman has seen that producing even the most successful series is profitable mostly to those who own merchandising and distribution rights. "This is one of the reasons we went public," stated Film Roman senior vice president John Vein, "to



DESIGNefx's Mickey's Shadow spot for Walt Disney Casting. © Disney. All Rights Reserved.

produce proprietary programming." Jim Belushi and Peter Akroyd (both brothers of the original live-action *Blues Brothers* characters, John Belushi and Dan Akroyd), are already set to record the character voices, while David Misch, executive producer of Klasky-Csupo's *Duckman*, will be executive producer with Phil Roman and Michael

established in Japan, Korea and Europe.

Film Roman Gets Out Of Red With Blues.

UPN has green-lit Film Roman's *The Blues Brothers: The Animated Series* to begin production. The series had been in development since early this year, but was "on hiatus" as of last spring, when unspecified "creative differences" were met between Film Roman and UPN. Film Roman, a public company, has suffered recent downsizing and decrease in stock

Waeghe.

Commercials

Spotlight

Boston-based **Loconte Goldman Design** created an animated teaser campaign for ESPNNews. The spots depict "The Vortex," an animated metaphor conveying the amount of news and information which is funneled to viewers through the sports network. 3D animation of "The Vortex" was created by Ken Russell. . . . **The Ink Tank**

in New York completed another commercial for TriState Megabucks. The 30 second spot, titled *Win Cash*, uses black on white line-drawings with watercolor, to depict a janitor attempting to move a heavy bag of jackpot money. R.O. Blechman was director, Tissa David was animator, and the agency was OGBE Communications. The commercial will air starting September 8 in the New England area of the U.S. . . . **The Ink Tank** also created a 30 second commercial for Phoenix Investments, titled *Boat*. In the spot, alphabet letters animated by Tissa David spell out the words "fiscal fitness." The agency was Emmerling Post Advertising, and ink and paint was handled by Tapehouse Ink and Paint. . . . Atlanta-based **Designefx** animated Mickey Mouse's shadow for four commercials in Walt Disney World's TV campaign to recruit cast members. . . .

The Dodgers Get Animated.

The Los Angeles baseball team, The Dodgers, have recently been immortalized as cartoons, in a 60 second movie trailer titled *The Adventures of Dodger Blue!* Developed by the Dodgers with Lizardi Communications, and animated by Designefx, the film portrays five of the Dodgers' star baseball players and their signature moves: Hideo Nomo, Eric Karros, Todd Hollandsworth, Raul Mondesi and Mike Piazza. The spot is currently being used in The Dodgers' 1997 advertising campaign, as a theatrical commercial screened in movie theaters before feature films.

Home Video

Cinar Brings Paddington To Time-Life. Canadian entertainment

company Cinar Films, Inc. has sold the U.S. and Japanese video distribution rights to the animated series, *The Adventures of Paddington Bear*, to American publishing conglomerate Time-Life. The first thirteen episodes of the series, budgeted at Canadian \$6.6 million, are in production now at Cinar's animation facility in Montreal,. Cinar, co-producing with Prot  cr  a, is working closely with Paddington Bear's creator Michael Bond to ensure consistency with the first FilmFair TV series, and the classic line of childrens books, which have sold over 25 million copies have been translated into more than 20 languages. *The Adventures of Paddington Bear* is already set to air on Canal J and TF1 in France, ITV in the U.K., and TeleToon, the new animation channel in Canada.



Disney's classic feature *Sleeping Beauty* is now on home video.    Disney. All Rights Reserved.

Sleeping Beauty Awakens On Video.

This month, Walt Disney Home Video will release the 1959 film, *Sleeping Beauty* on video in two formats. The Limited Edition version (\$26.99) includes a 16-minute mini-documentary on the making of the film, Disney's 16th animated feature, and the first ani-

mated feature to be shot in wide-screen 70mm. The Collector's Edition version (\$29.99) includes additional footage including the movie's original theatrical trailer. *Sleeping Beauty* sold over one million copies in 1988, when it was one of the first Disney classics to be released on video. It was released theatrically in 1959, 1970, 1979 and 1986. *Sleeping Beauty* will be available on video in U.S. stores from September 16-December 31. The laserdisc will be available on September 17.



Disney's *Brand Spanking New Doug*, *The Vampire Caper*.    1997 Buena Vista Home Video. All Rights Reserved.

Disney Scares Up Halloween Videos.

On August 26, Walt Disney Home Video released *Halloween Bootique*, a collection of 13 videos for the Halloween season. The animated titles in the collection are: *The Nightmare Before Christmas*, *Winnie the Pooh: Spookable Pooh*, *Winnie the Pooh: FrankenPooh* and *Alvin and the*

Chipmunks: Trick or Treason. Three new specials made for direct to video are also in the collection: *Winnie the Pooh, Boo to You Too*, *Brand Spanking New Doug: The Vampire Caper*, and *Quack Pack: House of Haunts*. Associated promotions include a mail-in rebate for Disney Interactive's *Nightmare Ned* CD-Rom sampler. Ranging from 25-95 minutes in length, the videos are

priced between \$12.99 and \$14.99 (SRP).

Interactive & Internet

Gameworks Scores \$76 Mil.

Sega GameWorks, the interactive entertainment venture backed by DreamWorks, Universal Studios and Sega, has secured \$76 million in private stock investments to finance the expansion of their chain of location-based entertainment centers. GameWorks facilities have already opened in Seattle, Las Vegas and Ontario, California. Additional locations are set to open this year in Tempe, Arizona, and Grapevine, Texas.

Events

In addition to our announcements in the Weekly Animation Flash and Animation World News, you'll always find frequently updated information and links for festivals and events worldwide, in Animation World Network's Calendar of Events section.

<<http://www.awn.com/awne/ng/village/calendar.html>>

Annecy Goes Annual.

Organizers of The Annecy International Animated Film Festival and Market (MIFA) have officially confirmed plans to hold their event on an annual basis. The world's largest and most prestigious animation festival, Annecy has been held every other year since 1960. Festival director Jean-Luc Xiberras announced May 26-31, 1998 as the set dates for the next fest, telling AWN that the move is "in order to respond to the professionals' need to meet in a unique place on a yearly basis." The annual format will allow more room for the increased number of films to be shown.

Xiberras adds, "It was not acceptable to have 1,000 films rejected from official selection each year. With the return to an average of 700 to 800 films received, and thus a reasonable portion represented in selection, the task of the jury will be more manageable." The format of the festival and market will remain the same, but MIFA will be consolidated, with one full day of screenings, conferences and workshops, followed by three days focused on exhibition.

The festival will remain a six-day format of competition screenings, retrospectives, exhibits and presentations. It is uncertain

how this news will affect other animation festivals which are traditionally held during the spring of Annecy's off-years. For instance, both of the biannual festivals, Zagreb (June 17-21) and Cardiff (June 23-28), are scheduled to take place just weeks after Annecy. Furthermore, close on their heels is the Hiroshima festival (August 20-24) and the Ottawa festival (September).

Watch the Annecy web site on Animation World Network in the coming weeks, for entry forms and information about programs.

<http://www.awn.com/annecy>

For background information on the festival, see "Rendezvous in Annecy: An Interview With Jean-Luc Xiberras" in the January 1997 issue of Animation World Magazine.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.10/articles/teninge.eng1.10.html>



Annecy's new annual schedule aims to draw the animation world to this beautiful French city every year.

MIPCOM. At the end of September, thousands of producers, programmers and broadcasters converged on Cannes, France for the MIPCOM and MIP Junior markets. From Reed Midem, the organizers of MIP-TV, MIP Asia and MILIA, MIPCOM is known as the place where international television deals happen. The 5th annual MIPCOM Junior ran from September 24-26, followed by the 13th annual MIPCOM International Film and Program Market for TV,

Video, Cable and Satellite, September 26-30. There was a 32% increase in exhibitors over one year ago, with 1,987 companies from 49 countries,

the top ten countries being USA (137 exhibitors), the UK (98), France (67), Canada (19), Germany (21), Japan (18), Spain (16), Italy (12), the Netherlands (10) and Belgium (9). Much of the animation activity took place during MIPCOM Junior, the relatively new children's programming-focused screening event which takes place two days before MIPCOM begins. Four major animation producers—TeleImages, France Animation, Nelvana and Gaumont Multimedia—used MIPCOM Junior as the launch for their new programs. Among the other highlights of MIP are a seminar on Television and the Internet and a tribute to Germany's booming TV industry.

Look for our event review by Adam Snyder in the November 1997 issue of Animation World Magazine, and for a taste of the buyer's side of MIP, read "Surviving

MIP: A Buyer's Guide" by Theresa Plummer Andrews, in the July 1997 issue of Animation World Magazine. <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.4/awm2.4pages/2.4plummer-mip.html>

Digital Film Fest Opens in NY.

The first D.Film Digital Film Festival, created by veterans of the defunct Low Res Film Festival, kicked off September 19-20 at The Kitchen in New York. Held in conjunction with the Downtown Arts Festival, D.Film showcases low budget films made with computers and other new forms of technology. Featuring animated pieces by the likes of Eric Rossner (an up and coming artist recently discovered by Nicktoons), D.Film's program will tour the U.S., stopping in San Francisco November 8-9, San Diego November 15-16, Los Angeles in February and Seattle in March. Not on the festival circuit? Visit <http://www.dfilm.com> to view downloadable Quicktime movies and information on how to make a digital film yourself.

New Shorts Film Fest. The Shorts International Film Festival is now accepting entries for its' first edition, to be held November 5-6, 1997 in Lincoln Square, New York City. The annual festival will feature seven competition categories: Animation, Drama, Comedy, Experimental, Student, Documentary and Foreign. Each category will award a \$2,000 cash prize. The entry deadline was September 15. Films must be under 40 minutes, and completed after January 1, 1996. For information, visit <http://www.shortcuts.org>

LEAF Grows Into Digital Media World. The event known as The London Effects and Animation

Festival (LEAF) will be taking place as part of Digital Media World, November 18-20, 1997. This may have caused confusion to some who have known it by the LEAF acronym. Now in its' fourth year and organized in association with ACM/SIGGRAPH, LEAF's program includes a recruitment fair, and presentations revolving around effects and animation topics. Richard Williams will offer his famed Masterclass, and the animator will also deliver the keynote festival opening address. Additional speakers at LEAF include representatives of various effects and animation companies, such as: Industrial Light and Magic, Ex Machina, Pixar, Blue Sky Studios, Jim Henson's Creature Shop, DreamWorks SKG, The Mill, Apple Computer, Pacific Data Images, Fantome, Walt Disney Feature Animation, Sony Pictures Imageworks and The Moving Picture Company. The LEAF Awards competition is open to works in the categories of art, commercials, education and training, feature films, short films, music videos, simulation, student and titles, idents and stings. An independent panel of judges comprised of industry experts, the media and potential clients will judge each of the LEAF Awards. The entry deadline was September 26. For information, visit <http://www.digmedia.co.uk/LEAF.html>

Hollywood Film Fest. The first Hollywood International Film Festival will take place October 14-19, 1997 in (where else?) Hollywood, California. The deadline for submitting films, however, is coming up on August 30. The entry fee is \$50 and all films must be on NTSC VHS. The four categories for this international, competitive festival are features, shorts, documentaries and animated films. The equiv-

alent of roughly \$150,000 (U.S.) in prizes will be awarded. The event also includes a symposium, a live cybercast and HollywoodMart (a film market). For information and entry forms, visit <http://www.hollywoodfilmfestival.com>

Awards

Several animation festivals took place last month and are reviewed in this issue of Animation World Magazine. Please consult the individual festival articles for complete lists of award-winning films.

KROK review by oTTo Alder.

Anima Mundi review by Edmundo Barrios.

Fantoche review by Thomas Basgier.

SAFO review by Joan Ashworth.

Emmys, Oh My! The Academy of Television Arts & Sciences' 49th annual Emmy Awards presentation took place in Los Angeles last month. Out of 28 categories, two are for animation. The winning programs were: Fox/Gracie Films/Twentieth Television's *The Simpsons: Homer Phobia* for Best Animated Program (for programming one hour or less), and to The Family Channel/Carlton UK Television/Hit Entertainment's *Willows In Winter* for Best Animated Program (for programming more than one hour). Earlier this month, the Primetime Emmy Awards were announced, naming three winners in the Creative Arts categories. A second win for The Family Channel's *Wind In Willows* went to the program's color director, Loraine Marshall, while Gary Hurst was awarded for production design for HBO's *Testament: The Bible in Animation—Moses*, and storyboard artist Phil Weinstein was awarded for his work on CBS' *Boo to You*

Too! Winnie The Pooh.

Mobius Advertising Awards.

The 27th annual International Awards Competition has put out the call for entries for the Mobius Advertising Awards. The competition is open to television commercials and campaigns which have been produced, screened or aired in the past 12 months. In addition to technique categories Animation-Computer, Animation-Non-Computer, and Animation-Computer & Non-Computer, there are more than 85 product-specific categories for everything from dairy products to toothpaste, which presents many opportunities for recognition. The entry fee is October 1 and the fee is \$120 per commercial. For information and entry forms, call (U.S.) (630) 834-7773.

MacCurdy's Women In Film Award A First.

On September 13, Women In Film honored Warner Bros. Television Animation President and Kids WB! Programming President Jean MacCurdy with a Lucy Award, in honor of the late Lucille Ball. This is the fourth annual presentation, but the first time that a woman in the animation industry has received this award. The ceremony took place in Beverly Hills on Saturday September 13. Additional honorees were comediennes Carol Burnett and Roseanne.

Faith Hubley Honored By IFP West.

On September 16 in New York, independent animator Faith Hubley will receive the first ever Special Gotham Award for Animation, from the Independent Feature Project (IFP) West. Hubley has produced 20 independently animated films, in addition to the more than 20 films she produced

with her late husband John Hubley. She has also worked in collaboration on films with her daughter Emily Hubley. IFP's Gotham Awards aim to celebrate New York as a center for filmmaking, honoring individuals who have demonstrated an outstanding commitment to independent filmmaking. Additional Gotham Award recipients for 1997 include Bob and Harvey Weinstein, Errol Morris and Macky Alston.

Hibbert Ralph Takes Home Award From Japan.

London-based Hibbert Ralph Entertainment was awarded the Children's Jury Award at the Kinderfilmfest in Japan, for their film *The Forgotten Toys*. The film has won six other international awards at festivals including Cartoons on the Bay and the Poznan International Festival for Children. A follow-up series to the film is now underway as a Hibbert Ralph Entertainment/Link Entertainment production for Meridian Broadcasting. For information about Hibbert Ralph Entertainment, read Jerry Hibbert's article, *Staying Ahead of the Game* in the February 1997 issue of Animation World Magazine. <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue1.11/articles/hibbert1.11.html>

Animation World News is compiled daily for publication in the AWN Daily Flash, the weekly Animation Flash email newsletter, and monthly issues of Animation World Magazine.

Send your newsworthy items, press releases, and reels to:

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bartv@awn.com

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Thomas Basgier

thomas@awn.com

U.K.

Alan Smith

alan@awn.com

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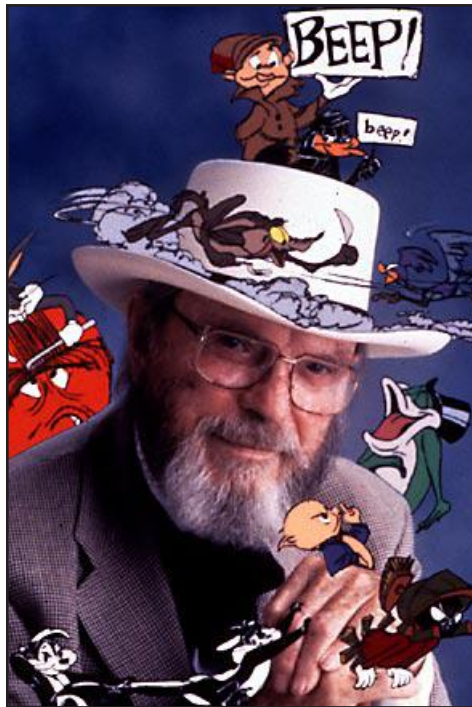
sales@awn.com

Happy Birthday, Chuck Jones!

by Wendy Jackson

Animation legend Chuck Jones celebrated his 85th birthday on Sunday, September 21, 1997. To honor the occasion, Warner Bros. invited 500 of his friends, colleagues, fans and family members to a special evening honoring the four-time Academy Award-winner. Following a cocktail reception and viewing of Chuck Jones' personal art collection in Warner Bros. Museum's new Animation Gallery, Leonard Maltin hosted an evening of accolades by more than 20 people, peppered with a selection of classic films directed by Jones like, *What's Opera Doc?*, *The Rabbit of Seville*, *Broomstick Bunny* and *One Froggy Evening*. Among the speakers were voice artist June Foray, *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening, Hope Freleng Shaw, daughter of the late animation director Friz Freleng, Warner Bros. Television Animation President and Kids WB! Programming President, Jean MacCurdy and numerous Warner Bros. executives. Pre-recorded salutations were also presented from the likes of Robin Williams, Ted Turner, Martin Scorsese, Phil Hartman and Quincy Jones. Even Bill and Hillary Clinton sent their regards to Chuck in the form of a letter read by Peter Starrett, President of Warner Bros. Studio Stores.

During the presentation,



Chuck Jones and his cast of characters. © 1997 Warner Bros., Inc. All Rights Reserved.

Warner Bros. confirmed and signed an "unprecedented long term agreement" with Chuck Jones, contracting him exclusively to create and develop projects and serve as a creative consultant to the studio. Jones has already been acting in a similar capacity through Chuck Jones Film Productions, which has produced several contemporary animated shorts using classic Warner Bros. characters. However, in his new role with the studio, Jones will serve more as an advisor than a producer or director. "It is an extraordinary pleasure for us to sign this unique agreement that guarantees this incomparable talent and leg-

endary member of the Warner Bros. Animation family will continue to be a vital creative force for Warner Bros. as long as he wants," said Robert A. Daly and Terry Semel, Chairmen and Co-CEOs of Warner Bros., as quoted in an announcement of the deal between the studio and Chuck Jones.

Chuck Jones closed the evening on stage, sharing memories of his career in animation. He recalled the many letters he had sent to Walt Disney in his early years, and how Walt personally replied to each one. Later, when he met Walt, Chuck thanked him for those letters and Walt replied, "Well, of course, you're the only animator that ever wrote to me!" With this example, Chuck inspired everyone in the audience to take the time to acknowledge our peers' accomplishments, and write to them in appreciation.

To honor the occasion, Warner Bros. invited 500 of his friends, colleagues, fans and family members to a special evening...

In our interview, Chuck Jones responded enthusiastically to *Animation World Magazine's* question: "Based on your years of experience in animation, what would you like to say to the young aspiring talent coming into the industry?" Chuck Jones stressed the impor-

tance of both life drawing and reading, while studying to be an animator. He said, "I think you'll find that any studio, they don't want you to draw Bugs Bunny. They want you to be able to draw the human figure. If you look back through the history of art, all the way back to the cave paintings, you'll notice that the great painters always were able to paint with a simple line, just like we do in animation. The main thing is to learn how to do it, then have something to say with your skills. Any writer will tell you that it doesn't do any good to write if you don't have something to say." This point should be well-taken by not only our younger readers, but everyone in the entertainment industry! You can view a video clip from our interview with Chuck, by downloading our exclusive Quicktime movie from the HTML version of this issue.



Chuck Jones with his daughter Linda, admiring the 85th birthday cake, given to him by Warner Bros. © 1997 Animation World Network.

Any writer will tell you that it doesn't do any good to write if you don't have something to say. - Chuck Jones

Chuck Jones Biography

Chuck Jones began his career in 1932 as an animation cel washer at Ubbe Iwerks Studio, after graduating from the Chouinard Art Institute (now the California Institute of the Arts). Four years later, he joined the Leon Schlesinger Studio (which was later sold to Warner Bros.) as an animator, and was assigned to Tex Avery's unit. In 1938, at the age of 25, Chuck directed his

first animated cartoon, *The Night Watchmen*. During his 24 years at Warner Bros., Jones created characters such as Marvin the Martian, Pepe Le Pew, Michigan J. Frog, Road Runner and Wile E. Coyote. He also helped

create Bugs Bunny, Daffy Duck, Elmer Fudd, Porky Pig and many others. He worked a brief stint at The Walt Disney Studios in 1955, but then returned home to Warner Bros. When Warner Bros. closed its animation unit in 1962, Jones went to MGM Studios to head their animation division. There, he collaborated

with Dr. Theodore Geisel (Dr. Seuss), producing and directing animated film adaptations of the Seuss' children's books *Horton Hears a Who* and *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*.

Upon leaving Warner Bros. in 1962, he launched Chuck Jones Enterprises, which produced numerous television specials and other projects from 1970 onwards, including *The Cricket in Times Square* (1973), *Gay Purr-ee* (1962) and animation for feature films such as *Mrs. Doubtfire* (1993). In 1993, Jones formed a new studio, Chuck Jones Film Productions, under con-



June Foray shared with the audience a drawing Chuck Jones made for her over 30 years ago. © 1997 Animation World Network.



Among the distinguished guests of the evening Warner Bros. Feature Animation President Max Howard (left) and director Bill Kroyer. © 1997 Animation World Network.

tract with Warner Bros. Based on the Warner Bros. Studio lot, Chuck Jones Film Productions most recently created several animated shorts for theatrical release, including *Chariots of Fur*, *Another Froggy Evening*, *Pullett Surprise* and *Father of the Bird*. Chuck Jones Film Productions closed its' doors earlier this year, but Jones will continue to influence new production through his new long-term agreement with Warner Bros.

During his more than 60-years in animation, Chuck Jones has created more than 300 animated films, and has directed some of the most acclaimed animated shorts of all time...

In the late 1970s, with his daughter, Linda Jones, Chuck began to create limited-edition animation art depicting characters and scenes from his films. Through a unique license agreement with Warner Bros., they began producing and distributing the limited-edition art through Linda Jones

Enterprises, Inc.(LJE). In December 1996, Linda Jones wrote "Through The Looking-Cel. . . Er, Glass," an article for *Animation World Magazine* about how these endeavors in animation art began. Now, in addition to operating three dedicated Chuck Jones Showroom galleries, LJE has product in more than 150 galleries and museums worldwide.

During his more than 60-years in animation, Chuck Jones has created more than 300 animated films, and has directed some of the most acclaimed animated shorts of all time, including *Rabbit Seasoning*, *Duck Dodgers in the 24th 1/2 Century* and *Duck Amuck*. He has won three Oscars, and received an honorary Oscar from the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences in 1996. In addition, he has received numerous lifetime achievement awards and honorary doctorate degrees, has been subject of many retrospectives and exhibitions, and has a star in his name on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.



Matt Groening (left) and *Animation World Magazine* publisher Ron Diamond. © 1997 Animation World Network

The HTML version of this article features an exclusive Quicktime movie of our interview with Chuck Jones.

<http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.7/2.7pages/2.7jackson-jones.html>

Further Reading:

"Through The Looking-Cel. . . Er, Glass," by Linda Jones. *Animation World Magazine*, December 1996.

Chuck Amuck: The Life and Times of An Animated Cartoonist, by Chuck Jones. Farrar Straus Giroux, New York. 1989.

Wendy Jackson is Associate Editor of *Animation World Magazine*.



Chuck Jones looking very dapper during his interview with *Animation World Magazine*. © 1997 Animation World Network.

Springfield, Nevada

by Wendy Jackson

Since 1987, viewers of *The Simpsons* have wondered about the true location of Springfield, the fictional town where the Simpson family resides. But now, at long last, the mystery has been unveiled through the latest project from the Fox promotional turbine. While Henderson, Nevada may not have a nuclear power plant or a Moe's Tavern, it does have the only life-size replica of the Simpson family home.



The now-famous landmark, The Simpsons home. © 1997 Animation World Network.

The idea to build the house occurred to the designers at Fox Interactive, while they were working on the 3-D visualization for the game, *Virtual Springfield*...

A Big Idea

The idea to build the house occurred to the designers at Fox Interactive, while they were working on the 3-D visualization for the game, *Virtual Springfield*, which is reviewed in this issue of *Animation*



Western Pacific's custom aircraft flew us from Los Angeles to Las Vegas. © 1997 Animation World Network.

World Magazine. Fox then teamed up with Kaufman and Broad, an architecture firm which specializes in building planned home communities, and Pepsi-Cola, who provided the distribution mechanism to promote the contest, offering the public a chance to own the home.

On August 1, 1997, the four-bedroom, 2,200 square foot home was unveiled, just 49 days after the concrete foundation was poured. During the September 21 premiere of the ninth season of *The Simpsons*, a winning number was announced. Game pieces, available inside specially marked packages of Pepsi soft drinks, can be mailed in to claim the grand prize of the house, or secondary prizes, which include one-year supplies of Mandarin Orange Slice, Bart Simpson skateboards, and *Virtual Springfield* CD-ROMS. No claim to the grand prize has been made yet, but stay tuned to *Animation World Magazine's* Weekly Animation Flash Email Newsletter for details.

Since the house was opened on August 1, it has become quite the object of attention in the neo-

suburban neighborhood, appropriately named Springfield. More than 30,000 people have toured its colorful interior, and thousands more have driven past for a quick peek. AWM just couldn't pass up the invitation to visit the Las Vegas-adjacent locale for an exclusive Matt Groening house-signing event, press tour and lunch visited by the unofficial mayor of Las Vegas, Wayne Newton

himself!

While Henderson, Nevada may not have a nuclear power plant or a Moe's Tavern, it does have the only life-size replica of the Simpson family home.

The Trip

After a brief flight on Western Pacific's specialty *Simpsons* aircraft, some 120 select media representatives, publicists, show writers and producers, and, oh, yeah, *The Simpsons* creator Matt Groening, arrived in Las Vegas. We were then bussed to the site of the Simpsons'



Matt Groening receives a plaque from the Mayor's office, commemorating "The Simpsons Day" in Henderson, Nevada.



Matt Groening paints his signature character, Bart, and his name, on the side of the garage, proclaiming, "I'll be the first one to vandalize the Simpsons' house!" © 1997 Animation World Network.



a plaque, and declared it "The Simpsons Day" in Henderson. After touring the 2,200 square-foot home with his two sons, Groening proceeded to "autograph" the side of the garage with spray paint, and put his name and hand prints in cement on the walkway, making

ing for a great photo opportunity for the horde of photographers and video crews covering the event.

It was a strange experience, kind-of like a cross between Disneyland's "Toon Town" and an eclectic grandmother's house.

The Tour

All of the guests were then escorted in small groups on a tour of the house. The tour guides were well-versed in Simpsons' trivia, pointing out details such as "the mystery door" next to the stairs and mouse holes in the wall. It was a strange experience, kind-of like a cross between Disneylands "Toon Town" and an eclectic grandmother's house. Covering every interior surface are 25 different colors of paint including Power Orange, Pink Flamingo, and Generator Green. We even had to wear special fabric booties over our shoes to protect the painted floors from scratches. We documented the tour on tape to bring you these exclusive photos as well as four Quicktime movies, available only in the HTML version of this issue. While it may not be quite the same as actually being there, these clips are a fun alternative. Besides, the spectacle will only be around for a little bit longer. As it turns out, the outside of the house



The family portrait above the fireplace. © 1997 Animation World Network.



Bart's room. © 1997 Animation World Network.



Lisa's room. Observe the saxophone on the bed. © 1997 Animation World Network.

will soon be painted a light brown to match the 151 other homes residing within the "planned community." The red fence, painted car, Barts tree house and other props will also be removed from the yard, but, whoever the future owner may be, the inside of the home will remain intact ... corn-cob curtains and all.

Quicktime Movies

The following digital movies are available exclusively in the HTML format of this issue, on the Internet at <http://www.awn.com/mag/issue2.7/2.7pages/2.7jacksonsimpsons.html>

1. *The Simpsons* airplane from the ground.
2. Matt Groening spray-painting the side of the garage, and wise-cracking all the while.
3. The grand tour, narrated by Editor-in-Chief Heather Kenyon. It's a big file, but well worth the wait!
4. Wayne Newton meets Matt Groening. This ones a collector's item!

Wendy Jackson is Associate Editor of Animation World Magazine.



The completed masterpiece. © 1997 Animation World Network.

home: Henderson, Nevada, a new development some 15 minutes from the fabulous Las Vegas Strip. When approaching the location, the brightly-colored house visually stood-out in the neighborhood of brand-new, homogeneous homes.

We were greeted by a life-size Simpson family: Homer, Marge, Bart, Lisa and Maggie, who must have been sweltering inside their costumes in the 90 + degree desert heat. Nonetheless, they were joined by Henderson Mayor Jim Gibson, who presented Matt Groening with



Though the outside of the house will eventually be painted a light brown, this cement walkway engraved by Matt Groening will remain as a permanent monument. © 1997 Animation World

Cartoon Network's Dive-In Theater: A Floating Cinema

How do you introduce new television shows and cartoon characters in a way that will excite and entertain kids? Throw a party, of course. And for the past three summers, Cartoon Network has done just that by traveling to several cities across the United States to host Dive-In Theater, the ultimate pool party for kids.

Cartoon Network's marketing department came up with the concept of Dive-In Theater in 1995 to showcase the 48 cartoon shorts from its *World Premiere Toons* project.

This year, the tour focused on the *World Premiere Toons* graduating class: three cartoons that have been upgraded to half-hour series on the network — *Johnny Bravo*, *Cow and Chicken* and *Dexter's Laboratory*. Dive-In Theater premiered the series at water parks and large municipal swimming pools, treating kids and their parents to exclusive poolside screenings on 9' x 12' movie screens.

How do you introduce new television shows and cartoon characters in a way that will excite and entertain kids? Throw a party, of course.

New Shows Debut

The first of the three new series featured at the Dive-In Theater, *Johnny Bravo*, tells the story of a free-spirit with bulging biceps

who believes he is a gift from God to the women of earth. The second show to debut, *Cow & Chicken*, follows a bizarre storyline that spotlights the misadventures of a surreal pair of siblings, whose relationship is underscored by their identity — little sister is a Cow and big brother is a Chicken. The senior rep-



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resentative of the trio is *Dexter's Laboratory*, which was Cartoon Network's highest rated show in 1996. *Dexter's Laboratory* chronicles the life of a boy genius who creates world-changing inventions in his beloved, but off-limits, bedroom laboratory despite the pesky interference of his sister Dee Dee. All three break out stars from the *World Premiere Toons* project debuted as series on Cartoon Network in mid-July and are currently playing on Cartoon Network channels worldwide.

This year's U.S. Dive-In Theater tour visited eleven markets, including Arlington, Texas, Los Angeles, California, Arlington Heights, Illinois, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, Riverhead, New York, and Atlanta, Georgia. In each market, Cartoon Network partnered with a local radio station and a local

cable operator to give away an estimated 2,000 tickets per venue.

Those in attendance enjoyed the show while floating in a "Cow raft," "Dexter submarine" or by treading water in a "Johnny Bravo inner tube" that is complete with an inflated blond pompadour. In addition, costumed characters

were on hand for photo opportunities, including Dexter, his sister Dee Dee, Johnny Bravo, and Cow & Chicken. Other poolside activities included two prize wheels that rewarded winners with Cartoon Network merchandise and other sponsored prizes. After the

show, Cartoon Network surprised the kids by inviting them to take home the inflatable rafts.

Those in attendance enjoyed the show while floating in a "Cow raft" or "Dexter submarine" or by treading water in a "Johnny Bravo inner tube" that is complete with an inflated blond pompadour.

Free Stuff!

If your town was not one of the 11 cities scheduled on this year's tour, or if you missed your chance to win tickets to the event, there is still a chance to win one of the tours colorful rafts. All you have to do is visit the HTML version of this issue and answer five trivia questions correctly. Hurry! Contest ends October 31.



DESERT ISLAND SERIES

On a Desert Island With Top Ten Toys. . .

Compiled by Wendy Jackson

What toys would you want to have with you if you were stranded on a desert island? This month, we asked the licensing executives and creatives of the industry's leading licensed animated properties to recall their favorite childhood toys.

Jenny Gentile is Senior Vice President, Licensing at Abrams/Gentile Entertainment. She is involved in licensing such successful properties as *Sky Dancers* and *Van-Pires*. Andrew Witkin is Sales and Marketing Manager for Nelvana Marketing Inc. Scott Mitchell Rosenberg is Chairman of Platinum Studios, the U.S. entertainment arm of the 25-year-old European comic rights holder, established to develop comic properties for television and motion pictures.

If the following selections are any indication of changes in the toy industry, it is apparent that very few of kids' favorite toys in the past were tied-in to television properties. While there are many animated series and feature-related toys on the market today, one has to wonder which ones will remain in the memories of kids 20 years from now.

Jenny Gentile's playpen favorites:

1. Push n' Pull.
2. Trolls.
3. Hula Hoop.
4. G.I. Joe.
5. Paddle Ball.
6. Lincoln Logs.
7. Twister.
8. Battleship.
9. Monopoly.
10. Mousetrap.

Andrew Witkin's childhood memories:

1. Barrel of Monkeys.
2. Slinky.
3. Silly Putty.
4. Lego.
5. Intellivision.
6. Mr. Turtle Pool.
7. Hot Wheels.
8. View Master.
9. Nerf football.
10. Monopoly.

Scott Mitchell Rosenberg's favorites:

1. Risk.
2. Stratego.
3. Monopoly.
4. Cowboy stuff.
5. Lite Brite.
6. Toy Soldiers.
7. Mego Superhero Toys (DC and Marvel).
8. Hot Wheels.
9. Star Trek Guns.
10. Silly Putty.



Jenny Gentile was involved in developing the successful *Sky Dancers* toy and animated series with Gaumont Multimedia. © AGE & Gaumont.



Andrew Witkin.



Scott Mitchell Rosenberg.

AWN Comics



The Dirdy Birdy
by John R. Dilworth

Home Video and Animation Art, November 1997

In November we will concentrate on two revenue-producing animation industries: Home Video and Animation Art. In the Home Video section, Ilene Hoffman will take an in-depth look at the masters of video - Disney. Fred Patten will investigate the Japanese direct to video world while Justus Olielo will take us for a tour of Africa's video parlors. George Johnston will examine the future health of the home video market and Russell Bekins will inform us about DVD and beyond. What is waiting to take video's place in our homes? For those video collectors, we will hear David Kilmer's confessions of being a home video collector extraordinaire.

Our Animation Art section of the magazine will focus on "What A Buyer Should Know: A Guide to Animation Art." We will also include Deborah Reber's interview with Christie's official animation art expert Pierre Lambert, who will help us pinpoint the serious animation art buyer, market and value. Our Student Corner will revolve around animation art this month as well, when we will instruct students how they can preserve their own animation art. (It could be worth a lot when you're rich and famous!)

Event reviews will include the Society for Animation Studies Conference, Barcelona's Sitges Fantastic Film Festival, CARTOON's Cartoon Forum in Arles, France and MIPCOM in Cannes. Harvey Deneroff will review Fox Feature's much anticipated first animated film *Anastasia* and Judith Cockman will take a look at Odyssey Video's new collection of computer animation videos that are distributed by Sony Wonder.

Animation World Magazine 1997 Calendar

Gaming: The World of Interactive Animation	(December)
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Producing Results	(January)
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Motion Capture and Stop Motion	(February)
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The Art of Pre-Production	(March)
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